



Pax et bonum.

THE FRANCISCAN

Vol. XVI No. 4 September, 1974

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Midrash and Lection in Matthew

M. D. Goulder

£8.50

This challenging and original book questions the accepted conclusions of synoptic research. It argues, first, that Matthew is an adaptation and expansion of Mark by midrash—that is by standard Jewish expository techniques—depending on no written source other than Mark, and only to a very small extent on oral tradition ; and, secondly, that Matthew was written to be read in Christian worship round the year, as a cycle of lessons following the Jewish festal lectionary.

‘... a work of learning and imagination... he seeks to overturn the standard conclusions about synoptic origins...’

Professor Kenneth Grayston

The Shape of the Church to come

Karl Rahner

£2.25

Translated by Edward Quinn

Written for a synodical gathering of German bishops, this book is immensely topical for Christians throughout the world. Part 1 deals with the synod ; Part 2 is an analysis of the religious situation, with particular reference to Germany ; in Part 3, the author states with his customary deep theological insight, his views on the future of the Church.

‘... Karl Rahner’s book is a signpost, stark and uncompromising, pointing to the pilgrim’s way’. **Kenneth Green, Catholic Herald.**

Man

Jürgen Moltmann

cloth £2.50, paper £1.50

Translated by John Sturdy

In this concise account of the Christian doctrine of man, the author surveys the main trends today in sociology, psychology and political science and researches into human behaviour, and he attempts to answer the questions modern man, in search of his identity, asks about himself.

Creation

Claus Westerman

cloth £2.50, paper £1.50

Translated by John J. Scullion, SJ

The author’s belief that the significance of the creation narrative is undiminished by modern scientific discoveries is set out in this exposition of the first three chapters of Genesis.

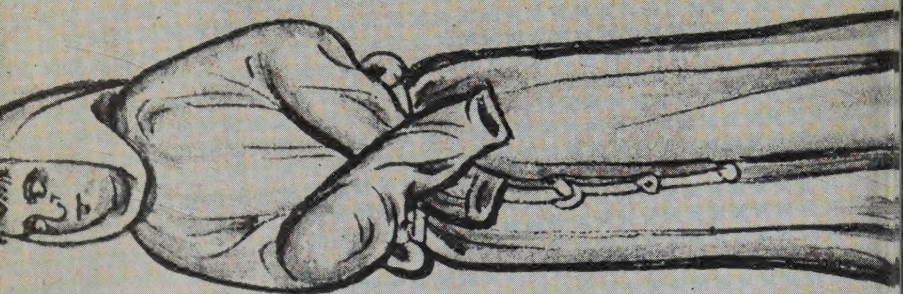
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Brother William of England, one of the first Friars. From the Chronica Maiora of Matthew Paris (cccc. MS. 16, fol. 67r).

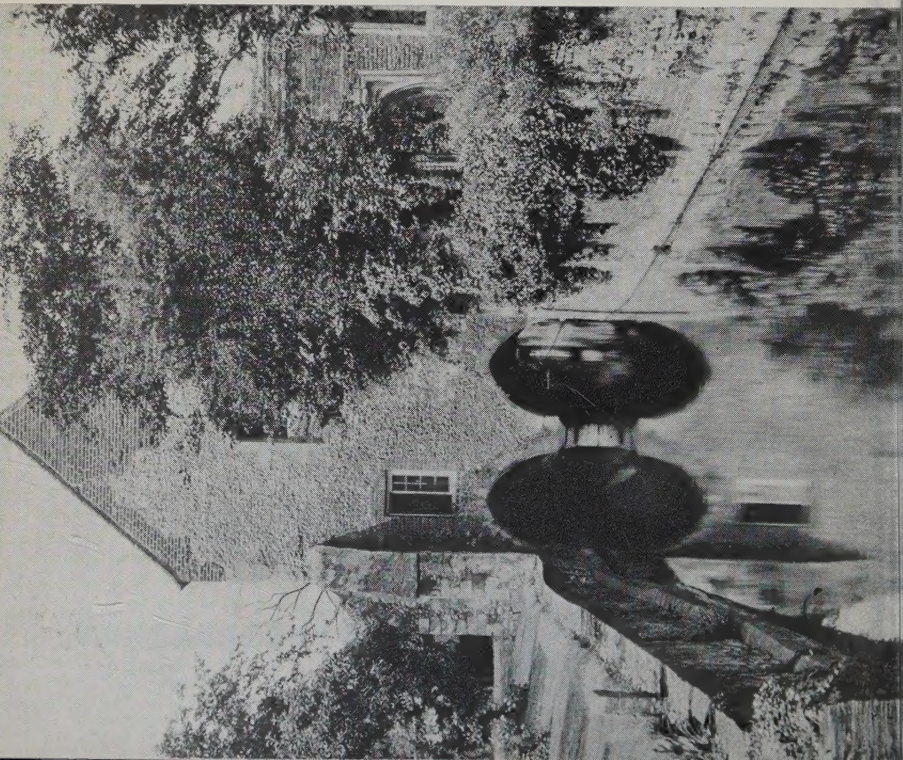
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*Greyfriars, Canterbury. The oldest Franciscan building in England, built c. 1267
next to the original settlement of 1224.*

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The Coming of the Friars



WHEN Brother Agnellus of Pisa and his little band of friars arrived at Dover and made their way to Canterbury in September 1224, none of them knew that Saint Francis was at that very moment approaching the climax of his solitary retreat on Mount Alverna, and that before

they had been one week on English soil he would have received the mysterious imprint of the wounds of Christ. And none of them knew that a little boy of seven called Bonaventure, playing in the streets of a small town in northern Italy, would one day fall under the spell of Saint Francis and bring such intellectual gifts to his life in the Order as to earn him the title of Seraphic Doctor. But all these things claim our attention this year, for 1974 is the seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the friars and of the Stigmata of Saint Francis, and the seven hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Bonaventure.

It is a time for celebrations, and celebrations are indeed taking place. But there would be no celebrations if these things had not lived on in the minds of men and impressed their significance upon succeeding generations. And celebrations are appropriate now, because these things have special significance for our own generation.

The coming of the friars meant renewal in the mediaeval church. Renewal is the accent of today's celebrations at Canterbury, the first major occasion jointly sponsored by the Anglican and various bodies of Roman Catholic friars. It makes renewal possible, because it is a return to the freshness of the original Franciscan vision, itself a renewal of the ageless Sermon on the Mount. But to Francis this was not just a beautiful idea. It was a practical programme. And so, with the utmost realism, he took its consequences through to the cross.

The vision of Francis goes three ways. It goes into the loving message of the gospel and its expression in acts of compassion and service, and so leads to the coming of the friars. It goes into the mind of the poet and mystic and lover, and leads to the sublime experience on the heights of Alverna. And it goes into the dedication of man's highest gifts and talents for Christ, and leads to the selfless achievement of Bonaventure. All three ways have their message for today.

The Minister General's Letter

July, 1974.

My dear friends,

The Stigmata of S. Francis which we keep in September and which is to be a central feature of the celebration in Canterbury to mark the seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the friars to England produces in us a sense of awe amounting almost to fear. It was my privilege recently to be taken to La Verna by Father Max Mizzi of the O.F.M. Conventuals and with me were Brother Wayne and Margaret Robinson of our Third Order. It was rather a cold grey day at the end of April and as we motored from Assisi the weather became worse. As we climbed higher we entered the low clouds that were shrouding the mountains and so we were in a drizzly rain. We saw a very different La Verna to what is often seen by pilgrims going in crowds in the warm and brilliant summer sunshine when it looks very beautiful and romantic. We also went at a time when there were not many people there—it was quiet and we could feel the stillness and the quiet of this very holy place. It was an immense privilege to have Father Max to conduct us round and to lead our prayer for he has a great love of S. Francis and everything to do with the Saint.

Although the weather was cold and wet there was still a great beauty and grandeur about La Verna, but there was a severity also so that through the beauty came a sense of tremendous suffering. We saw the cleft in the rock left by the earthquake where Francis slept with a rock for his bed—just bearable on warm dry summer nights, but what about the cold wet nights? We saw the spot from which in his struggle with Satan he was almost hurled over the cliff to be broken to pieces on the rock beneath. We were reduced to silence and awe and not a little fear and to the point of tears.

Is this the Francis we know? The joyous, singing, loving Francis? But there is another side to full Franciscan living, an agony of loneliness, of intense physical hardship, of spiritual suffering and conflict with evil, of fasting and praying which has its focal point in all that is meant by the Stigmata, when Francis was so one with the suffering, crucified Christ that his very wounds were graven deep in the flesh of Francis.

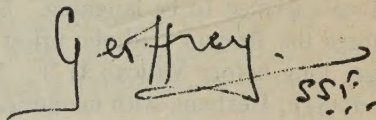
If, like S. Francis, we are to be instruments of God's peace, bringing love where there is hatred and hope where there is despair, if, like S.

Francis we are to radiate the life of the risen Christ, then like S. Francis, we must plunge deeply into Christ's Passion and share his sufferings and death. If we would live with Christ we must also die with him. La Verna and the holy Stigmata point us to that dying to self which is the only way to resurrection.

The Franciscan greeting *Pax et Bonum* is marked by the crossed hands—the wounded hand of Jesus crossed with the wounded hand of Francis. It is those who are prepared to go to the length of dying with Christ who are able to be instruments of the peace and goodness of God.

I am writing this in Belfast where I am staying with our Brothers in the Shankhill district and all around are the marks of destruction, violence and hate. *Pax et Bonum*. As we try to share something of the agony and tragedy of Belfast and other similar situations in which we find ourselves, may God be able to use us as instruments of his peace.

May God's peace fill you all,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey', followed by a horizontal line and the initials 'SSF'.

Minister General.

Price Increase

We very much regret that owing to increasing costs it is necessary from our next number to increase the price of this journal to 25p per copy, £1.00 per annum. Our last rise in price happened in 1970, so we are sure readers will understand that a further rise can be delayed no longer.

Could you help for one year or more ?

The Diocese of Gambia and the Rio Pongas (in West Africa) is in great need of a retired person with accountancy experience to put in order the books and train a person in book-keeping.

This diocese is one of the poorest in the Anglican Communion and is in no position to pay a salary. Any person willing to help the diocese would be given return fare, board and lodging.

For further information and application the address is The Rt. Reverend Regal Elisee, Bishops court, P.O. Box 51, Banjul, The Gambia, W. Africa.

Quarterly Chronicle

Brother Michael writes :

EUROPEAN PROVINCE In the summer of 1946, a party of pilgrims set out from a valley near Wooler in Northumberland to visit places associated with the great northern saints—Saint Cuthbert in particular. They were mostly students and schoolboys. Now one is a brilliant surgeon, another the Bishop of Manchester, and the rest include the Guardian of our Friary in San Francisco, and the Chancellor of the Diocese of Oxford.

We picked up an ancient trek-cart lent us by Scouts in Durham and walked across the sands to Holy Island, where we were met by Brother Douglas. That night we slept in a barn, having earlier in the evening performed Lawrence Houseman's little play *Sister Gold*. Brother Denis was the leader and played Saint Francis magnificently, improvising his own lines and everyone else's when they were forgotten, and, failing everything else, bursting into gales of laughter ! In fact we always seemed to be laughing. So we went on our way : to Kelso, where the Roman Catholic priest made us welcome (nearly 30 years ago, long before Vatican II !) ; Melrose, where Cuthbert was born, Jedburgh, Hexham, with memories of Wilfred and Aelred ; Chester le Street, where Cuthbert's body rested for over a century ; and finally to the great romanesque Cathedral of Durham, where he is buried. In each place we celebrated the eucharist, sang hymns, performed our play, and Denis preached a splendid sermon that was never quite the same ! In Durham we performed all round the tomb of the Venerable Bede (whose thirteen-hundredth anniversary we keep this year) and then walked bare-foot to the tomb of Cuthbert for our thanksgiving.

This established a tradition which continued for over twenty years—what has remained unforgettable about the first one is our welcome at Durham from the Van Mildert Professor—Canon Arthur Michael Ramsey and his wife Joan, who took us all to stay in their house on College Green. What a party ! Denis knew him as a former Vicar of Saint Bene't's, Cambridge. I think they enjoyed it—certainly they never forgot it, and Mrs. Ramsey reminds us about it every time we meet. It was to be the first of many meetings—both hands waving in the air, and eyebrows twitching with merriment.

Not long after that he became Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, giving unforgettable lectures on the Atonement, radiating

the grandeur and glory of the Gospel—catching at phrases and making magic of all the meaning. The series ended on a note of triumph—the crowded lecture room filled with a voice like a trumpet call, summing it all up :

‘ Rex tremendae majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me, fons pietatis ’.

(King of majesty tremendous,
Who dost free salvation send us,
Fount of pity, then befriend us).

as he quoted the great Franciscan poem, *Dies Irae*.

And yet there has never been a hint of artificial solemnity, but rather a bubbling sense of fun. The greatness includes an awareness of the folly as well as the majestic glory of God. His book on the Transfiguration has, at the beginning, a quotation from ‘Alice in Wonderland’ ! Because he is at his public best when addressing students—as in the great University Mission—or answering their questions, the more intimate and loving understanding might go unnoticed. It certainly didn’t go unnoticed when he returned to be Bishop of Durham. I remember a wide-eyed boy on a housing estate in Sunderland saying, ‘Mam, I’ve seen a Shepherd—he had a hat on, and a hook !’

Walter, the chauffeur and friend of bishops and archbishops, in Manchester, York and Canterbury for nearly half a century, who knows endless intimate stories of them all, seems unconsciously to slip into a different attitude when he speaks with such real affection of ‘Arthur Michael’.

Many of our Brothers and Sisters will remember him best for his sermon at the Jubilee in Westminster Abbey, two years ago. Not just for the things he said, or for the love he had for us, but for the manifest love he has for the Religious Life itself. As Visitor of Mirfield he knows about it all intimately from the inside—shares the problems and particular needs of monks, friars and nuns. Really *believes* in it.

And so he came, inevitably, to Canterbury. It has been said that the predecessor of his whom he admires most is Anselm—scholar, man of penetrating insight into the mystery of God, man of towering intellect, and power to pray—whose book on the Atonement, *Cur Deus Homo* is one of the great scholastic monuments of the Middle Ages ; it’s what you would expect.

Another of his predecessors in the seat of Saint Augustine was a Franciscan—John of Peckham (1279—1292). During his time he granted a trust deed for the establishing of an almshouse and farm to be attached to the leper chapel of Saint Nicholas on the outskirts of Canterbury. In this house it has been suggested we might establish a Franciscan presence in Canterbury, to help in ministering to millions of pilgrims who come here, and to enter into friendly relation with the Roman Catholic Friars who live nearby. So the wheel comes full circle.

The weekend of his last ordination in Canterbury as Archbishop coincided with the ordination of Kevin as priest in the lovely old church at Carrickfergus outside Belfast. As the preacher for both services I was able to act as a link between them. Nothing could have illustrated more clearly how much he cares. He, and indeed all the ordinands in both places, were manifestly glad to pray for each other and take the opportunity to express a common priesthood and service in love.

Among the final events before he retires, the archbishop will preside at the celebration which marks the coming of the first friars to Canterbury in 1224—seven hundred and fifty years ago. What a way to do it. An opportunity for us to wish him and his wife the richest blessings in their retirement (and how much we shall look forward to reading the books he will no doubt write !).

It only remains to repeat what he said at our service in the Abbey—with heartfelt love and gratitude to him from us all—‘Thank you, Thank you, Thank you’.

Professions and Clothings

Following the Pentecost Chapter in June, the Province has looked forward to a number of Professions : these include Brother John Derek’s profession in Simple Vows, made at Hilfield on 25 July ; and Brother Raphael professed at Alnmouth on 24 June, just before his move to North Wales. Brother Simon, also elected, will make his simple profession later this year.

Encouraged by the historical significance of Brother Kevin’s ordination, Brothers Norman Paul and Arthur are to make their profession in Life Vows in Northern Ireland. The Bishop of Connor, once Rector of the Parish where Brother Arthur previously attended, will receive their vows on 12 October.

Sister Jannafer made her First Profession on 27 July in the Community of S. Francis. Sister Wendy, until recently a novice at Compton Durville, was clothed as a novice in the Second Order at Freeland on 10 July. At Hilfield, the Revd. Roger Bohun was clothed as a novice on 2 July, taking the name of Brother Hugh. Brother Liam and Brother Brian Thomas have returned to the noviciate, at Hilfield and Alnmouth respectively.

Ordinations

Brothers Barnabas Joseph and Basil are to be ordained priest on 3 August, by the Archbishop of Tanzania, John Sepeku. The ordination will take place in the community chapel at Mtoni.

Canterbury

On Sunday, 15 September, a mass of thanksgiving will be celebrated at Dane John by the Archbishop of Southwark, at noon, while an Anglican eucharist will be celebrated at S. Augustine's Abbey by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Father Agnellus Andrew O.F.M. will preach at an ecumenical service in the cathedral at 3.30 p.m.

Saturday, 14 September, is International Youth Day, when the programme includes a special youth service at noon, simultaneous Anglican and Roman Catholic masses at 6 p.m., and a barbecue at 8 p.m.

Movements

Recent arrivals at Hilfield Friary during the summer have included Brothers Alexander from Liverpool and Jacob from Glasshampton. Having undertaken a rather longer journey, a welcome also awaited Father Antonio Sato, a Japanese Anglican priest under Franciscan rule ; Father Antonio is to share the life of the brothers for a year.

Brother Simon moves his base from Plaistow to Glasshampton as he begins his second year at King's College, London. For this, he is moving into Vincent Square during term-times. Brother Gregory at Alnmouth is beginning a similar course at King's in October and he will be living at Plaistow.

Brother Christian has returned from Tanzania, following the ordination to the priesthood of Brothers Barnabas Joseph and Basil, and he will come to live at Plaistow.

Brother Maurice joined Brother Arnold at Gillott Road, Birmingham in the summer, adding strength to the work there.

We welcome Brother John Baptist from the American Province who has returned to Britain to join Brother Harold at Shepherd's Law.

Summer Camps

The annual Franciscan Families Camp in July brought many together once again, upon the slopes of Hilfield Friary. Following up the Derby Mission last year, a group of young people from the Parish are expected to test the vacated camping facilities, as are the choir of Slough Parish Church who come every August.

Meanwhile, at the Budle Bay camp in Northumberland Brother Keith, with Brothers Damian and David Douglas, and also welcoming Sister Lucia into the team, led another group of Celtic Campers, following the traditions which go back in the memory of some retired campers to Father Algy and Wooler.

S. Bene't's Concert

The first concert to be held in S. Bene't's for some time took place this summer. The Allegratti Quartet led by James Ellis included in their programme Haydn's

Quartet in G major (Opus 76:1), and Beethoven's Quartet in B flat major (Opus 130) with Grosse fuge (Opus 133). The success of the evening was confirmed by the large audience who attended.

Jubilee

We congratulate Brother Barnabas on the Silver Jubilee of his Ordination to the Priesthood, on Trinity Sunday, 12 June, 1949, at Durham Cathedral. The following day he celebrated his first eucharist, the transferred Feast of S. Barnabas. The friary at Hilfield recorded the occasion which happened to fall at the time of the Pentecost Chapter meeting, and joined by members of his family, Brother Barnabas was the celebrant and preacher at the High Mass of the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Plaistow Friary nearly in order

The programme of alterations made last year have greatly improved the facilities, and opened up possibilities for a much greater use of the premises. When all the re-decoration has been completed, or well on the way, we hope to be able to use our potential more fully. Meanwhile we have been pleased to welcome a number of groups here recently, including the Church Army from Blackheath, some Benedictine Brothers from Nashdom, the Sisters from Ham Common, a Chelmsford Diocese Tutor Group and a party from Charlton-in-Dover. Len Howard, one of our Swedish (but still very English) Tertiaries brought a party from Bruksvallarna, following a visit to the friary at Hilfield.

There are some parishes in South-East England that have expressed a desire for closer links with the Society, and we hope to be able to help in establishing these.

All this gives cause for thankfulness to God and suggests ways forward once we have put our own house in order.

S. Francis School

Brother Anselm writes : Friends ask, 'Are boys confirmed while they are at S. Francis School?'—and I should like to give an indication of our practice here in connection with a pastoral issue which (in common with so many others) has lost the clear definition which once it had.

At the heart of the School's life as a worshipping community is the Sunday eucharist. All attend, with very varying degrees of identification with what is going on. Some boys feel drawn to that outward expression of commitment which being a communicant involves (whatever it signifies to them inwardly), and after instruction they become communicants. We believe that this is valuable and right, and we have episcopal sanction for what could be interpreted as a breach (at any rate of the letter) of the rubric. It makes it possible for a boy to feel at one with the family here at a deep level, without expecting him to make promises about what is to happen when he has left. At present eight boys out of our forty-seven are communicants.

Sometimes we have evidence of a groping towards Christian maturity, of a sincere intention, and reasonable hope of future support. Then, after instruction, we try to make of the sacramental occasion a solemn and memorable event. Recently we welcomed Bishop Bill Lash who confirmed two boys during Sunday mass. The occasion was such as to hold the attention of all present, and I am sure was meaningful to Kevin and Steven. Please pray for them, and for us all.

Belfast Expansion

The third little kitchen house, vacated by its tenants in June, has been redecorated and already Brother Edmund is living there. This gives us space for a chapel-cum-library and two guest rooms—and a *purple* bathroom. Until now, without such luxuries, the brothers in Morpeth Street have been travelling two miles for a bath.

Brother Kevin celebrated his first eucharist in S. Luke's Church where he is curate. Brother Geoffrey preached on this occasion, and he and Brother Wayne were warmly welcomed by church members.

Brother Edmund now assists in S. Simon's parish, near the Falls, and his help is greatly appreciated. Brother Norman Paul continues his work and ministry in the infirmary.

Brother Kenneth was among the many other summer visitors to Belfast, and Brother Jonathan is due to conduct the annual retreat for local Companions in October.

Glasshampton

Reminders that we live in a changing world penetrate deep into the monastery. The beautiful wood behind the house has been totally demolished, and how this is missed in the autumn season. New trees have been planted and so the scene will change again as the years go on.

Many groups come to share in and receive from our life of prayer. A number of clergy quiet days, men's groups and parties of school children have visited. The retreats for the brethren now held here, as well as in Hilfield and Alnmouth, have by all accounts been appreciated.

Liverpool Interregnum

'Business as usual' is the motto of S. Francis' House as they continue the Franciscan presence in Liverpool during a brief interregnum. Over the summer months, brothers from various friaries are taking their turn to provide a continuing family life until a more permanent staff arrive in November. Brothers Nicholas and Frederick came from Plaistow, Mark and James borrowed from Alnmouth, and Sister Alison Mary will be joining the task force for four weeks.

Meanwhile, the friary's Guardian, David Stevens, continues to involve the house in its industrial setting aided at present by Brother Harry who is temporarily covering the secretarial work of the Industrial Chaplaincy. A group of leading industrialists were able to meet with the Minister General visiting the house in June, and after lunch, a discussion took place on the theme, 'Men's wants and needs'—what a chance that was to share the Gospel!

C.S.F. move in

In mid-May, the Sisters' new accommodation in San Francisco was ready in Army Street. They were soon joined by their first postulant, Mary Fisher, who had been practising as a lawyer. Sister Lucia, at present at Compton Durville as a novice, but who came from Massachussetts, is due to return to the States and will join the Sisters in San Francisco in October.

Meanwhile, back in Britain, Sisters Angela Mary and Barbara have moved into the new House at Newcastle-under-Lyme. Not unexpectedly, a number of visitors have followed. As Glasshampton is for the brothers, this House is intended as a focus of prayer and quiet for the novices and sisters.

Now we are six

With the arrival of Brothers Raphael, Rufus and Juniper to Ty'r Brodyr, the Guardian, Brother Nathanael describes the event as a turning point in the life of the house. The anticipation building up over the past months, not only within the Parish of Llanrhos, but also further afield both within the Church in Wales and outside it, turns to expectancy. It is hoped that a number of engagements can now be undertaken, and among these, there have been many requests from Universities and other young people. The ecumenical field has not been overlooked, as the Brothers have been invited to take a turn in the Methodist local circuit, conducting and preaching at morning and evening worship. Brothers Nathanael and Silyn are each to be licenced in the Diocese of S. Asaph by the bishop, as will Raphael in due course.

Brother Nathanael continues: With six now living in the house, the number of rooms available for visiting guests becomes limited, and we do not feel we can provide purely holiday accommodation. At the same time, we are always ready and happy to welcome visitors who are holidaying in the area.

By the next edition, we may be able to supply a bi-lingual account of our life in Ty'r Brodyr, as I shall hope to have completed the Welsh crash-course at Aberystwyth University. Da boch chi.

Focus on Pilton

Brother Michael Kentigern writes: ' Having collected the keys to our new home in Edinburgh, and obtained special permission to remove the boards from the windows ourselves, I had spent precisely five minutes in the front garden, armed with a claw-hammer, to find myself swarmed by kids. The initial break-through with them, accepting their help in preparing the house for paper and paint, gave us the acceptance of the parents in our own street. Soon gifts of furniture were being offered and marched up the street, and we had begun.

' Why the Religious Life has always failed to take on in Scotland is an old and frequently-asked question. I am sure that it is not anything like a whole answer but there are nonetheless some very real and basic character differences between Scots and English. We have to take these seriously if as a Society we are to nourish successfully Scottish vocations in the future, and if we are to establish the Society in Scotland.

' Arriving in Edinburgh with no remit and little idea of what we were going to do has been one of our greatest blessings. It has allowed us the first months to get on with establishing our prayer life and style of living while making an almost unconscious offering of our family life—probably our biggest contribution to the local community.

' Work is beginning to emerge and a certain number of commitments are being made, now that Brother Bruce has joined us as Guardian of our small friary. Brother

William Henry is doing a certain amount of work with the local Sisters of Charity, who have been here for two years. He also lends a hand in the club run for the teenaged unemployed, and there is work to do behind the counter of the Thrift Shop, run by the local churches. Brother Malcolm gives priority to Father Bob Sinclair, priest in charge of our Episcopal church, assisting in congregational and sick visiting, and becoming involved with the day-to-day surprises that beg attention, a listening ear or action ! We all take a share too in the local Meals-on-Wheels service.

' Both Malcolm and myself were involved in the local Summer Play Scheme during the school holidays, and I have become involved with an ' alternative school ' for those excluded from normal day school for reasons you can easily imagine '.

Yes, the Brothers live within the system that causes so much pain, loss and confusion. They know most of the questions, and try to share in it all. Without knowing many of the answers, they trust in the power of love.

Retreats and Quiet Days

This aspect of our work at Hilfield is certainly increasing and there will be several groups coming this Autumn. There will be the annual Autumn retreat for priests in the first week in October, conducted by the Bishop of Dover ; the Confirmation candidates from our county town of Dorchester where there is an effective team ministry in operation, are coming in for a day in September as are the members of the Deanery Mother's Union. We also look forward to the clergy from the Dorchester Deanery for a retreat and conference.

Franciscan presence in Dorset

The licensing of our Tertiary Brother, Harold Best, as priest-in-charge of Leigh, Chetnole and Batcombe, has been fixed for the end of July. It is hoped that the parishes of Hilfield and Hermitage and also the Brothers at the Friary will work increasingly as a team and in a real way, there will be an increased Franciscan presence in this area. Certainly, the brothers have greatly enjoyed the increased opportunities during the interregnum, for doing much more preaching and ministering in the neighbouring villages.

Ecumenical Contacts

In the last few months the brothers at Hilfield have become much more involved with the local Methodist Church, largely through the work of Brother Gordon in Yeovil, and we had the great pleasure of welcoming the Methodist Ministers from both Yeovil and Weymouth for a quiet day in May. The Guardian was also very pleased to be present at the ordination to the Ministry of our friend, the Reverend David Hall, during the Methodist Conference in Bristol.

Alnmouth Festival

The afternoon speeches were held at Howick Hall. Brother Michael spoke on the theme ' Other People '. The day ended with a barbecue on the paddock at the friary and a torchlight procession through the terraces to the top lawn, where compline was said.

Prison and Borstal

The contact with Portland Borstal is something which goes on very happily and a

number of the brothers made a reciprocal visit to Portland in July. This will be repeated again in September. It has been very good to renew contact with the Prison at Dorchester through the weekly visits of Brother David Douglas.

Stigmata Festival

In view of the fact that this year is the seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Stigmata of S. Francis, and also the coming of the friars to England, the Hilfield Stigmata Festival on Saturday, 21 September, will be held in Sherborne and not at the friary. The solemn eucharist will be held in Sherborne Abbey at 12 noon, at which the Bishop of Salisbury will preside and the Bishop of Exeter will preach the sermon. Afterwards, the sandwich lunch will be held in the big schoolroom of Sherborne School, followed by an informal meeting at which the Minister General and the Minister Provincial will both speak.

At Home

On 26 October the friars will hold an 'At Home' at S. Germain's, City Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. Friends are invited to share a family eucharist and agape. Will they please bring sandwiches, and tea and coffee will be provided. The eucharist will be at 12 noon. Brother Michael will be talking about the community.

Gillott Road

The architect has produced a plan for the extension of the kitchen. It is hoped that all will be completed before the approach of winter. The next thing will be the redecoration of the house. Brother Arnold is grateful for all the help given by friends in a variety of ways, especially for gifts of cigarette coupons.

Five Thousand Miles

Taking up his duties as the new Chaplain of the Third Order, Brother Edward travelled five thousand miles in the first two months visiting tertiaries, groups and meetings. There are now four hundred and seventy professed tertiaries, and one hundred and forty-seven novices and postulants, among whom men and women are fairly equal in numbers, according to the Guardian, the Very Reverend John Betton. This is bound to bring in new ideas and expressions of the Franciscan life, though the Order values the many whose longer membership brings both a sense of tradition and stability.

Senior Brethren

Many of you will be very sorry to know that Brother Denis is not very well, and at the time of writing has had to go into the Yeatman Hospital in Sherborne. We know you will all remember him in your prayers.

Brother Neville has gained mobility through the aid of a wheel-chair.

Some seed fell on stony ground . . .

Brother Blackbird has made himself a home at Ty'r Brodyr. He hops into the kitchen when Sister Gwenfryd's back is turned, helping himself to whatever scraps

he can find. Unfortunately he has developed a jealous streak and guards his territory with ferocity against other birds. The family have tried speaking to him on the Franciscan interpretation of peace, but he must be a slow learner, as there are no signs of sharing the scraps.

Brother Reginald writes :

PACIFIC PROVINCE I had to cut short my time in New Zealand in April when I heard that Brother Shaw was in hospital recovering from a serious operation and Brother Bernard was laid up with glandular fever, a long drawn out business which only a long rest would cure. So back I went to be with the brothers at Brookfield. I am glad that both Bernard and Shaw are now back at the friary and making good progress. On Sunday, 19 May, Christopher Duncan was clothed as Brother Dominic Christopher in the chapel at Brookfield.

The brothers in Auckland were kind enough to let me move Owen to Brookfield for a period. He settled there quickly and happily and is a great support to Bernard and the brothers. So I was able to come to PNG as planned at the end of May. First I went to Madang to conduct a retreat for the clergy of the Highlands region, part of area of which our tertiary, Bevan Meredith, is bishop. It was good to see more of Bishop Bevan : so far our meetings have been brief and by chance, usually at Port Moresby airport ! Then I went to Lae and for several days enjoyed the hospitality of Fred and Marjorie Bedbrook. I was able to spend some time with Brother Leslie who with some of his building team was completing some new houses at the diocesan headquarters.

Brother Colin has settled happily as assistant guardian at Jegarata. He has the garden well organized : not only are the flowers as attractive as I think I've ever seen them, but a lot of food is being grown as well. Colin, Paulus, Theophilus and Joannes recently went on patrol to Wanigela, one of the first places where the church was established in Papua, and where now there is a good deal of apathy and quite a lot of sorcery is practised. At present Edmund and Joannes are at Korisata. The brothers are doing more of this patrol work. It seems to be the new pattern of evangelistic mission : nothing spectacular, no preaching to the multitudes, but spending time with small groups of people. In principle it is similar to the kind of mission which Rodney and I did in New Zealand. In an Auckland suburb we were hardly on patrol, but house meetings were the main activity

of the week. Spending time with smaller groups in which people can talk about their ideas and problems is a way of mission which seems to be valid in the face of the apathy and hostile forces (be they materialism, economic and social pressures, or sorcery) which everywhere assail Christians today—whatever the differences between one country and another.

Having achieved self-government last year PNG is moving rapidly towards independence. 1 December is a *possible* date for this to take effect. Some people are apprehensive. A lot of things have been said in the press outside this country to encourage criticism and do little to reassure the people of PNG and their leaders. Nobody would expect that here, any more than in other countries which in recent years have become independent, the process would be free of difficulties or mistakes. Demonstrations of university students in Port Moresby and Lae and the boycotting of lectures for several days last week may be hailed by some as signs of unrest and disorder. But underlying the students' demand for higher allowances is a deep concern about their country and its future. Representatives of the student body sat down with the Chief Minister and talked about their problems and came away satisfied. If this is any indication of the way PNG is going to deal with its problems when independence comes, it is something to be thankful for and to give confidence to all who are concerned about this country.

The church here also faces the question of independence. This would mean that the diocese of PNG, at present part of the province of Queensland, would be divided into several dioceses to form an independent province with its own archbishop. The question has been discussed in regional conferences and has to be decided at the diocesan synod this year. As with the nation so with the church. Some are apprehensive. Will Independence mean the end of support from the church overseas? The church in PNG (and the same applies to the Solomon Islands) needs to become self-supporting and it is learning to be, but the time has not come yet when it can do without overseas help. The same applies to the Society of S. Francis in PNG and Melanesia. Of course one result of the political changes is that the cost of living is rising steeply. The brothers are well aware of this: aren't we all? The pattern repeats itself the world over.

S. Francis College is in good shape. But patterns of evangelist training will probably change and the college programme may well have

to change in the next year or two. Meanwhile Simon Peter and Timothy are living in the college and find this a great advantage in their pastoral work with the students and their families.

Simon Peter is to make his life profession at Jegarata on 29 June. His brother is bishop of the diocese and will receive Simon Peter's vows on behalf of the Protector. Francis Damian and Randolph are to make their first profession at Koke on 20 July. Joseph David and Leo Anthony are to make their first profession at Brookfield on 28 July. Daniel is to be ordained priest at Honiara on 29 September.

Paulus Moi and Comins are at Dogura. Paulus is doing theological studies at Newton College and Comins is doing a medical course (and getting top marks, we hear) at S. Barnabas' Hospital.

On 24 June, Brother Luke appointed **AMERICAN PROVINCE** Brother Mark Francis as Chaplain of the Third Order. He will take Brother Robert's place. Mark Francis was ordained along with Dominic Joseph on 22 June ; Bishop Jonathan Sherman came to Little Portion for the double ordination.

Early in July Brother Robert left Little Portion to take on his new duties as Guardian of the Friary in San Francisco. We know that San Damiano will benefit from Robert's keen leadership. In just a few years the Franciscan presence in California has grown to ten brothers and four sisters and a lively group of Tertiaries and Associates (Companions). We ask your prayers for furthering the work of the Society in California.

After a period of waiting for his visa, our Brother Seth finally set forth for Trinidad to join Brother Don. Don has been alone in Trinidad since the Lenten Mission and writes glowing letters about the country and its people. He was overjoyed to see Seth, and now plans can be made for our house. The exact nature of the work in Trinidad will be settled once the full team arrived. Brother Dominic Joseph hopes to be on the island by mid July or early August, and Brother Sebastian will come a little later. Luke our Provincial Minister will visit during the month of September and at that time will profess Brothers Don and Seth.

We look forward to August and the visit of Brother Jonathan who will be conducting our Annual Retreat. Jonathan is known by

several of the brothers in this province who have spent some time in England. The retreat week is always a time of rest, prayer and refreshment of the spirit.

During the summer we have had two clothings on 24 June, Brother Aaron and on 27 July, Brother Mark Damian. We ask your prayers for these two novices.

June by tradition is the month of weddings and Little Portion has been no exception to this tradition. Three weddings were held at the Friary. The Reverend Evelyn Newman married her son Peter to Kate. The Reverend Mrs. Newman is a local Methodist minister and a very old friend of the community. It was a great joy for the Friars to have the wedding here. Brother David preached on the happy occasion. Weddings in friary chapels are unusual but by the end of June we had grown quite accustomed to the fact. On the 29 June, Brother David married a couple from our Sunday congregation and most of the brothers attended the service.

Summer at El Rancho was a busy time with a hundred to a hundred and fifty young people in residence most of the time. We suspect that the Ranch brothers look forward to September when life becomes a bit more quiet. But there is joy in serving others.

Companions' Camp 1974

A TENTATIVE plan in the minds of some Companions over the past few years came to fruition this Spring when a small group of Companions accepted the invitation in THE FRANCISCAN to camp at Hilfield Friary at the end of May.

Companions came from Hampshire, Wiltshire, Kent, Essex and London and were blessed with a week of beautiful weather. Some stayed in the guest-house, while others camped on a lovely site overlooking the friary and a wide expanse of the Blackmore Vale.

Our aims were to enjoy a week of fellowship as Companions and to share in the life of the friary without disrupting its routine. We immediately felt part of the family, thanks to the warmth of the Brothers'

welcome, and our inclusion in the worshipping life of the community at the offices and daily eucharist.

In addition, we had a daily discussion session led by Nancy Bussey (London) and we were most grateful to Brother Kenneth for his challenging evening meditations on the obligations of a Companion.

The programme included optional outings to Sherborne, Maiden Castle, Cerne Abbas and Abbotsbury, and one day was spent with the Sisters at Compton Durville. There was time, too, for leisurely exploration of Hilfield and the surrounding countryside.

Several days finished with the whole group having their evening meal together and we shall all remember with joy the final supper when Brother Jonathan and some other Brothers joined us for our meal on the hillside, followed by compline led by Brother Kenneth.

We hope that Companions from other countries may join in a similar venture planned for 1975 (23—30 August). The booking secretary is : Miss Kathleen George, 2 St. Alphege Road, Dover, Kent. Companions may stay in the guest-house with all meals provided, or may camp bringing their own food and equipment. The maximum number will be thirty persons.

Jack Winslow

A Personal Recollection

AS a young Etonian, with a glorious soprano voice, singing outside Queen Victoria's window on the day of her Diamond Jubilee. As a senior member of the O.T.C., lining the road at Windsor for her funeral. Travelling with his sister from London to Brighton on a very early motor vehicle at the exhilarating pace of fifteen miles an hour. These are some of Jack's own early recollections. I met him only for the first time in 1928 although his name had been one to conjure with for quite a time. He had rebelled against the old missionary set-up in India and had founded the Christa Seva Sangh where Indians and Europeans were trying to live together in brotherly unity and Franciscan simplicity. It was an experiment greatly frowned upon by our elders and betters, but to my generation it was a real break through in inter-racial relationships, and our first meeting was when he admitted me as a Tertiary of the Sangh. I had been stationed in a well-established mission of the old school but my first visit to his Ashram at Poona had convinced me that Jack's way of life was the right one. Not many people then shared his vision of an Indian Church, under Indian leadership, with friends from overseas living among them as brothers and sisters rather than as fathers and mothers of the Christian family (and Victorian fathers and mothers at that !). But we were a

growing number who received from Jack the great inspiration of our lives, and the fact that his vision has now been realised all over India shows him to have been a true prophet.

He appeared among us, a slim figure in a white home-spun cassock with a saffron girdle, sandals on his bare feet and with the beard which was the symbol of his life as a Christian guru. He was experimenting with Indian ways of living, Indian ideals of holiness and Indian forms of worship, and had gathered round him at Poona a brilliant group of dedicated men, Indian and European, who shared his ideals to the full. Sunrise and sunset saw them sitting on a stone circle in the garden, facing east or west, for their morning and evening Sandhya. The little chapel, built on the pattern of a Hindu temple and decorated with frescoes by an Indian artist, made a wonderful setting for the Indian liturgy which he compiled, drawing freely on the worship of the ancient Syrian Church. Those were the days before 'inter-faith dialogue' was even thought of, but it was continually taking place at the Ashram where many lasting friendships were made. The simplicity of the house revealed a standard of living then almost unknown in British circles and the whole place breathed an atmosphere of devotion, study and gaiety which was as refreshing as it was serious.

Jack's work and influence were by no means confined to Poona. He travelled all over India taking retreats and making endless contacts. He travelled always third class, and the unusual sight of a white man dressed as an Indian guru gave plenty of openings for questions and conversation, never at all difficult in an Indian train or bus. He saw clearly the devastating effects of Christian disunity and rejoiced greatly when he was consulted over the drafting of the constitution of the Church of South India, as he did when this Church, and later the united Church of North India, came into being. He was deeply concerned with the freedom movement in India and acted as go-between for Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin (both of whom he knew well), especially with regard to the rights of Harijans under the new constitution. He did not mind how much he stuck out his neck for what he believed to be right and yet it was always done in a Christ-like spirit which no one could deny. It seemed indeed as if India was blood of his blood and bone of his bone.

In view of all this it is impossible to describe what an impossible, unthinkable, outrageous blow it seemed when Jack—Jack of all people—announced that he was not coming back to live and work in India. In 1933, while on leave in England, he had been caught up in the Oxford Group Movement and believed that he was called to a new way of discipleship in this country. Being what he was, no one could doubt his sincerity, but we grudged him to England more than words could say. India needed him so badly and loved him so dearly, but when he appeared for a short time minus his precious beard we knew that his mind was made up. His subsequent ministry at Bryanston School and Lee Abbey is widely known and appreciated, but has no part in my personal recollections. These only began again when, with the Farncombe Community, I found him retired in Godalming and full of joy when we invited him to celebrate the C.S.I. liturgy in our Chapel.

Yet, in the end, India really had the last say in his life. He longed to go back just once and used to say : ' If the best comes to the best, I may lay my bones in

India'. So he went last January, after forty years absence, aged ninety-two, to re-visit his old haunts and his old friends. On the day of his arrival in Bombay he preached in perfect Marathi. In Poona, at the two receptions held in his honour, the strength of his memory and the alertness of his mind amazed everyone who heard him speak in his clear strong voice. During his stay at the Ashram visitors poured in, former members of the Sangh, old students, people whom he had baptised and many who had been influenced for life by his teaching, all meeting him again with tears of joy. He was overjoyed at the re-opening of the Ashram as an ecumenical venture where Roman Catholic and Anglican (now C.N.I.) Sisters live together, putting into practice so many of the principles for which it was founded.

The Indian life-style and Indian liturgy, enhanced with the beauty of Indian music and Indian culture, once again revived there are surely signs that this 'grand old man' was at least forty years ahead of his time in his realisation that the Gospel of God can only reach non-Christians in India as and when it is presented through Indian forms of expression. Jack had indeed a triumphal procession, from Bombay and Poona, through Ahmednagar, and Panchgani, Agra and Delhi. He only just missed leaving his bones in India but who can doubt that this culminating experience gathered into one all his life's ministry so lavishly poured out on both sides of his world?

CAROL GRAHAM.

CANTERBURY

Remember the Festival week is 6—15 September !

International Youth Day on Saturday, 14 September.

Ecumenical events on Sunday, 15 September.

THE LONDON RALLY

will be held at Westminster Central Hall on Saturday, 5 October.

12.00 Eucharist and sermon

1.15 Lunch (please bring own food—tea/coffee provided)

2.15 Informal Meeting

4.00 Tea

THE NORTHERN FESTIVAL

will be held at S. John's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Saturday, 27 September. See details in our last number.

MIDLAND 'AT HOME'

on 26 October, at S. Germain's, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

The Coming of the Friars to England



THE Friars Minor first arrived in England on 10 September, 1224. There were nine of them, four clerks and five laymen. They were led by an Italian, brother Agnellus of Pisa, then about thirty years old and in deacon's orders, who had been chosen for the task of establishing a province in this country by S. Francis himself at the General Chapter held at Assisi at Whitsun, that same year. Agnellus had already had some experience of administration and responsibility as custodian of the friars in Paris. The French province had been one of the first to be established, in 1217, and the mission to England was helped from France. The little group was transported across the Channel by the generosity of the monks of Fécamp in Normandy.

The three clerks who accompanied Agnellus were Englishmen : Richard of Ingworth, an older man, a priest and preacher, who was subsequently Provincial Minister of Ireland, and two young men, Richard of Devon, an acolyte, and William of Ashby, who was still a novice. The laymen were mostly Italian, Henry of Treviso, William of Florence, who once the mission was successfully launched returned to France, James, a novice, Melioratus, whose provenance is not stated, and a Frenchman, Lawrence of Beauvais. Their names, and the copious and vivid detail we have about the early history of the Minors in England, we owe to brother Thomas of Eccleston, whose chronicle, completed probably in 1258, recorded a wealth of facts and stories he had taken pleasure in collecting during the course of the twenty-six years he had spent as a member of the Order.

On first arrival the group stayed two days at Canterbury, lodging with the monks at the Cathedral, and at once split up, four going on to London, the two Richards, Henry and Melioratus. Agnellus and the other four remained in Canterbury, lodging temporarily at a priest's hostel, but they were soon granted the use of a small room under a schoolhouse. In the evenings, after the schoolboys had gone home, they used to come up into the schoolroom and comfort themselves by warming the dregs of beer left over from the day upon the fire. The four who went on to London made their way immediately to the house of the Dominicans, who had come to England three years earlier, in 1221, and were settled in Holborn. The Dominicans made them

welcome, treating them as they would members of their own Order, and they stayed a fortnight, at the end of which time a house was hired for them in Cornhill by John Travers, who was a sheriff of London from 1223 to 1225. Here they lived in poverty and simplicity, stopping up the holes in their cells with bunches of grass, living often on coarse bread or even bread substitutes, their beer sometimes so sour that some preferred to drink water. In these early days they were reluctant to contract debts, even for urgent need. Eccleston recalls that a convent once took in a flagon of beer on credit, but this was to offer their guests ; they only pretended to drink themselves. Agnellus at first considered he ought to keep a check on expenditure and once audited the accounts of the London house, but though the brothers lived frugally he was so perturbed by the cost of living that he threw down the tallies (wooden receipts) and parchments, exclaiming : ' Wretched me ! '—and never audited the accounts again.

Before the end of October the two Richards left London for Oxford, where once again they were kindly received by the Dominicans who gave them hospitality for a week, after which they hired a house in the parish of S. Ebbe's. The Oxford community established, they went on to Northampton, staying in a hospital before hiring a house in the parish of S. Giles. Other houses followed, at Cambridge, Lincoln, Nottingham, York, Salisbury, Worcester. Eccleston does not enumerate them all, but he states when the province had been going for thirty-two years that the Friars Minor had forty-nine convents. He estimated the number of brothers at that time at 1242.

Agnellus and his companions quickly attracted recruits to their Order. Their first postulant was called Solomon. He was a good-looking young man, so he was presently given responsibility for the catering and sent out to beg. When he begged bread of his sister she averted her face from him and cursed him, for families by no means invariably rejoiced when a member entered religion, more particularly an Order that was new, unconventional and radical. Eccleston has left us a picture of him, carrying meal or salt or a few wizened little figs for a sick brother in his hood, a bundle of firewood under his arm. He was careful not to accept beyond what was absolutely necessary, maintaining the strictest standards of poverty in food and clothing. Thus he got so cold that on one occasion he thought he would die, and the brothers, having nothing with which to warm him, all huddled against him, reviving and warming him with their bodies. He was

ordained acolyte by Archbishop Stephen Langton, who received him with the words : ' Let brother Solomon of the Order of the Apostles be admitted '—an indication both of the unfamiliarity of the Order in England at that time and of the fidelity of the early friars in England to the commitment to live like the apostles that S. Francis stressed in his Rule. Brother Solomon, like the other early friars, walked barefoot as the apostles had done, but the English climate added a further hardship. Walking barefoot through thick snow resulted in severe gout which immobilised him for two years. His foot became so infected that the doctors recommended amputating it but the painful operation was postponed, and Solomon became convinced that if he could but visit the shrine of S. Eloy at Noyon in France he would recover. When Agnellus heard this he ordered him to be conveyed there without delay, regardless of difficulties. As a result of this kindness and this faith Solomon recovered sufficiently to be able to walk without a stick. He became guardian of the house at London and confessor general to the whole city. Other early postulants included William of London, who was a member of the household of the justiciar, Hubert de Burgh, an educated layman and a famous tailor, and an eighteen year old called John who persuaded a priest who was suffering badly from toothache to send bread and beer to the Franciscans. The toothache was eased and both promptly joined the Order. Eccleston also mentions several knights ; but even more significant for the success and reputation of the Order was the accession of a number of distinguished scholars. The Oxford house was particularly successful in attracting not only students but masters. Adam of Exeter, William of York and Adam Marsh, who had a European reputation, became Friars Minor. Agnellus persuaded no less a person than Robert Grosseteste, who subsequently became bishop of Lincoln (1235—53), to lecture to his friars at Oxford with the result that the Franciscan school there became famous and built up a tradition of learning and scholarship.

The friars were dependent upon gifts and door-to-door begging for their support. The houses in which they lived they owed to the generosity of numerous benefactors, ranging from clergy, knights, merchants and officials, to the king. At Canterbury the master of the priests' hostel in which they had stayed gave them a site and built them a chapel. His gift was made the property of the citizens on the understanding that it was to be lent to the friars for their use, as their Rule

forbade the ownership of property. The archdeacon of Canterbury, Simon Langton the archbishop's brother, Henry of Sandwich, a justice of assize and a warden of the ports of Dover and Sandwich, and Loretta, countess of Leicester, who was living as an anchoress at Hackington, were also very generous to them. In London rich merchants were their principal benefactors, providing sites and houses, defraying the costs of alterations, additional buildings, and the aqueduct, to which the king contributed. Henry III helped them in many other places ; for instance at Cambridge, where the first lodging provided for them by the citizens was an old synagogue next to the prison. They and the gaolers had to use the same door and they found such close proximity distasteful. Their first chapel at Cambridge was so humble that a carpenter erected the main structure in a single day, using fifteen split tree trunks. As their number grew they often had to move from their original sites to more spacious ones, or else enlarge their buildings. They were so scrupulous at first about receiving more than they regarded as absolutely necessary and in accordance with rigorous poverty, that at Gloucester, for example, Agnellus made the friars give back part of the site offered them. Later, when they needed it, they had great difficulty in reacquiring it. The early spread of the Order was so successful and rapid that at the first Provincial chapter, held in London, they were able to divide the country into custodies. Each custody became associated with a particular quality. London excelled in the devotion with which the divine office was sung, Oxford in study, Cambridge in avoiding money, York in zeal for poverty. The custodian of York, brother Martin of Barton, who had known S. Francis, would not allow more brothers to live in any house than could be maintained by begging in its neighbourhood, without contracting debts. Debts were a matter of keen concern. At a Chapter held in London to celebrate the opening of their first chapel, the gift of a city alderman, a brother preached a sermon on the subject. The situation of those responsible for the friars' housekeeping was like that of a priest who every year celebrated the feast of S. Nicholas. However he became so poor that he could not afford his usual celebration. On the day of the feast he lay in bed, listening to the bells ringing for Mattins, and wondering what he should do ; and the first bell seemed to say : ' How shall I get it ? '—and the second : ' On credit, on credit '. Then both together chimed : ' Some from him, some from them '. And so he made his feast. As far as I know this is the first recorded use of a popular song on London's bells that was to become ' Oranges and Lemons '.

Finally, in 1236, Agnellus fell sick of dysentery at Oxford, brought on by his constant travels, so it was said ; after a while the sickness grew worse, and for three days before his death he cried without ceasing ' Come, sweetest Jesus ' ; then received the last sacraments, advised on the appointment of his successor, and died, widely regarded as a pattern of the good religious life. He recommended as his successor Albert of Pisa, Haymo of Faversham or Ralph of Rhiems : a fellow Italian, an Englishman and a Frenchman ; and Albert and Haymo succeeded him in turn and both went on to be Ministers General of the whole Order. Between them they revived and reshaped it after the calamitous rule of Brother Elias in the 1230's. Their names and origins show how rapidly the humble movement started by Francis in Umbria in 1209—10 had become a cosmopolitan Order, an avant-garde expression of religious sentiment inspiring recruits from every walk of life and every western people.

HIGHGATE.

ROSALIND BROOKE.

Saint Bonaventure

Seraphic Doctor, 1217—1274



THIS year which marks the 750th anniversary since the Franciscan Friars first came to England, is also the 700th anniversary of the death of S. Bonaventure. While we are recalling the former with thankfulness to God, we ought not to forget the latter anniversary, nor allow it to slip by without record or remark. S. Bonaventure was precisely what posterity has given him as his proper title : *Seraphic Doctor*—an intellectual giant, burning with the love of God, who served the Lord with all his heart and mind as a follower of the Poor Little Man of Assisi. It is not only in the pages of the *Fioretti* and the writings of Leo, Rufino and Angelo that we find the ' real ' S. Francis. For all their freshness and simplicity, these have no exclusive claim to the authentic picture of S. Francis. Were these, in fact, our only sources, we should have no more than a highly romantic or naïvely visionary picture of S. Francis. S. Bonaventure's theological and mystical reflections on the life and spirit of the Poverello, whom he

considered a perfect contemplative, have given us a rich and precious understanding of the Saint through the eyes of a learned and saintly follower who loved him above all for his humility and poverty.

S. Bonaventure was born in 1217 in Bagnorea, a small town lying between Orvieto and Viterbo in northern Italy. He tells us that at an early age (when he was about twelve years old) he was cured of a fatal illness through the intercession of S. Francis. The debt of gratitude he felt towards the Saint for his life is what moved him to accept the decision of the General Chapter of Narbonne in 1260 to write the life of S. Francis. In 1235 he went to Paris where he studied the arts. By 1243 he was Master of Arts and in that same year he joined the Franciscan Order and began his theological studies. The Franciscan tradition, above all the holiness and spirit of its Founder, became now the chief factor in S. Bonaventure's theological and spiritual formation. In 1244 he made profession of vows in the Order and for the next decade he pursued his theological and biblical studies. He obtained the title of Doctor of Theology in 1254. In the midst of his academic career, while he was regent master in the Franciscan School at Paris, he was elected Minister General of the Order on 2 February, 1257. He was now pulled away from the peace and calm of a life of study and thrown into the maelstrom of the Order's history, at a time when feelings were sharply divided on the interpretation of the Rule and mind of S. Francis and when Joachimite ideas were exercising a strong influence in some sections of the Order. Shortly after his election he went to Mount La Verna in Tuscany to meditate on the life of S. Francis in the very place where the Saint had received the Stigmata some thirty years before. From his experiences on La Verna came one of his most beautiful and profound works : *The Journey of the Mind to God*, in which he traces the steps of the soul's ascent to contemplative union with God. For the greater part of two decades he served the Order as its General Minister, making incredible journeys in Italy and France to preach the word of God, to exhort the friars in their observance of poverty and to correct abuses against the Rule. In May, 1273 he was created a Cardinal (tradition has it that he was washing dishes when the news was brought to him) and later that year he was consecrated Bishop of Albano. It is recorded that he had refused earlier to accept the Archbishopric of York. He took an active and influential part in the proceedings of the Council of Lyons. He died in Lyons on 15 July, 1274 where he lies buried. He was

canonized in October, 1482, by Pope Sixtus IV and declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Sixtus V in 1588.

S. Bonaventure holds a unique place in the Golden Age of the Scholastics, among whom he adhered unswervingly to the teaching of S. Augustine. However, it is not this aspect of his thought that I want to mention here. Instead, I propose to meditate a little on his love of S. Francis and his mystical teaching.

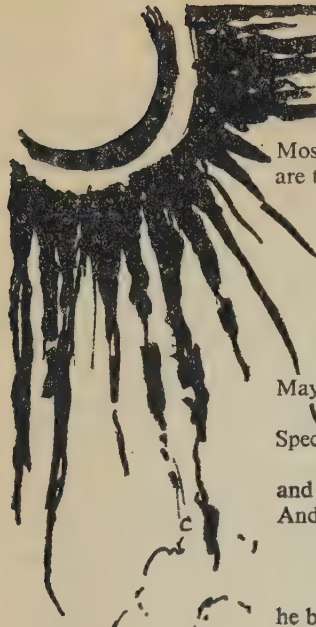
His love of S. Francis pervades every page of his mystical writings and one reads these with a deep sense of admiration for the holiness and humility of their author. What seems to have attracted him to the Order at first was the similarity of its history to that of the early Church. Just as the Church began with a little band of fishermen and then later attracted some of the greatest minds of Christian Antiquity, so the Franciscan Order started with simple and unlettered men, but soon drew to itself learned masters and clerics from the Schools. When S. Bonaventure joined the Order he came under the direct influence of Alexander of Hales, a learned master from Gloucestershire, who had himself entered the Order at Paris in 1231, much to the consternation of many of his contemporaries. In the works which date from his early years in the Order, S. Bonaventure has little to say about S. Francis. For example, in his long *Commentary on the Sentences* he makes no more than two brief references to S. Francis. But from the time of his visit to La Verna in October, 1259, his works reveal a depth of knowledge and love of S. Francis, and tremendous zeal for the observance of the Rule and they tell us much about his own discipleship of S. Francis.

There are some people who maintain that S. Bonaventure betrayed the ideals and attitudes of S. Francis, especially in the question of learning and studies. This, it must be said, does grave injustice to S. Bonaventure. At best S. Francis's attitude to learning was ambiguous ; his ideals and charism were uniquely his own and cannot be emulated. Moreover, we can never get away from his injunction in the *Testament* : ' All theologians and those who minister to us the most holy words of God we ought to honour and venerate as those who minister to us spirit and life '. While he advised the unlettered not to strain after learning (*Rule* 1223, c.10), he also exhorted those who worked with their hands, to do so ' faithfully and devoutly, yet in such ways that, excluding idleness which is hurtful to the soul, they do not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion ' (*Rule* 1223, c.5).

Both manual work and prayer, evidently, can have their dangers for the soul. We should also note that S. Francis never forbade learned men to enter his Order. The idea that there is something not quite authentic about a learned Franciscan, is a notion born of fantasy and romanticism, contradicted by the first century of the Order's history in general and most forcefully of all by S. Bonaventure himself. The learned to whom God has given the vocation to serve him with the powers of the mind, also need God's grace in their longing for holiness and salvation. S. Bonaventure was deeply aware of this need. He submitted the entire treasure of his philosophical and theological knowledge to the spirit of S. Francis and in this lies his greatness and humility as a true Franciscan.

There is not space to show in detail how S. Francis was the inspiration of so many of his works. It must suffice to say a brief word about his love of S. Francis which comes through a study of five sermons on the Saint contained in vol. IX of the *Opera Omnia*. He avows unselfconsciously in the first sermon that what moved him to give it was obedience to the Pope and a very special love he bore S. Francis. What comes over strongest of all in these sermons is his love and admiration of the poverty and humility of S. Francis. Perhaps this is something we would expect from a man of learning who knows so well the terrible dangers of pride and vainglory that lurk in knowledge that is not wisdom. Speaking of the excellence of the poverty of S. Francis he remarks that poverty makes a man heavenly, above all when it is poverty in which a man glories and finds joy. He goes on : ' and you will not find anyone who has ever professed poverty as S. Francis professed it or who gloried in it as he did '. God confirmed his Order and the profession of most high poverty by His own bull of approval in impressing the seal of the Stigmata on his humble and poor servant, blessed Francis.

In a meditation in the fifth sermon on the text of Matt. 11 : 29, ' Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart ', S. Bonaventure applies these words to S. Francis as one who followed faithfully in the footsteps of Christ. To be meek, he says, means to be brother of all ; to be humble is to be least of all. The follower of Christ must be meek in his relationships with other men and humble before God. To be meek and humble is to be a poor little brother, that is, a friar minor. This is the name S. Francis wished his followers to have : ' They are all to be known as Friars Minor without distinction ' (*Rule* 1221, c.6).



CANTICLE OF THE SUN

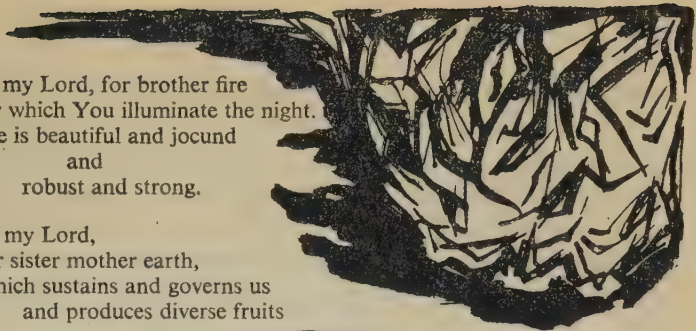
Most high, omnipotent, good Lord Yours
are the praises the glory and the honour
and every benediction. To You alone
most High
do they belong
and no man is worthy
to mention
You.

May You be praised, my Lord
with all Your creatures.
Specially master my brother
the sun, which gives day
and You shine thro' him.
And he is beautiful and radiant
with great splendour ;
of You
most high
he bears significance.


Be praised, my Lord,
for sister moon and the stars ; in the
sky You have formed them
clear and precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, for brother wind
and for air and cloud, and good and every weather
through
which You give
Your creatures food.

Be praised, my Lord, for sister water who is
very useful
humble
precious
chaste.

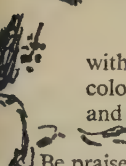


Be praised, my Lord, for brother fire
by which You illuminate the night.
He is beautiful and jocund
and
robust and strong.

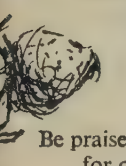


Be praised, my Lord,
for our sister mother earth,
which sustains and governs us
and produces diverse fruits

with
coloured flowers
and herbs.



Be praised, my Lord, for those
who pardon
for Your love
and withstand infirmity
and tribulation. Blessed are those
who carry on in peace,
because by Thee, most high,
they are surrounded.



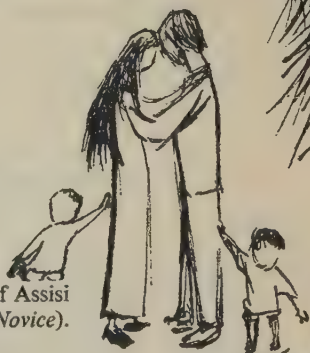
Be praised, my Lord,
for our sister mortal death, from which
no man living may escape ; woe to those
who die

in mortal sin ;
blessed are those
who find themselves
in Your most sacred
wishes — because
the second death will
do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him
thanks and serve ye Him with
great humility.

S. Francis of Assisi
translated by Michael Francis S.S.F. (Novice).

drawings by
a Sister C.S.Cl.



In this—to be a friar minor—is contained the summary of the Gospel life and the teaching of S. Francis.

Every theological doctrine of S. Bonaventure can be traced back ultimately to a source in the spirituality of S. Francis. His doctrine of exemplarism (every creature is a word of God), his Christocentric teaching, the primacy of charity, are all theological expressions of the intuitions and insights which came from S. Francis's seraphic love of God.

It is not an oversimplification to say that S. Bonaventure's entire literary output had but one aim : to lead the reader to wisdom, which can never be attained by erudition alone, but ultimately only through holiness. The mystical way to union with God is not the privileged path of a few (be they learned or unlettered), but is open to all who have the will to follow the call of grace through its various stages to contemplative union. Recalling the Stigmata of S. Francis on La Verna, he writes in *The Journey of the Mind to God* : ' Here he passed over into God in a transport of contemplation. He is set forth as an example of perfect contemplation . . . And thus, through him, more by example than by word, God would invite all truly spiritual men to this passing over and this transport of soul. In this passing over, if it is to be perfect, all intellectual activities ought to be relinquished and the most profound affection transported to God and transformed into Him ' (VII, 3).

CANTERBURY.

ERIC DOYLE O.F.M.

An Orthodox meets Frater Franciscus



AT Subiaco in 1971 I met Frater Franciscus. Wandering around the Sacro Speco I was thinking of all those links that still unite East and West, when suddenly I found myself before the ambiguous Frater. Benedict I know—a saint of the undivided Church, especially beloved among the Greeks ; my patron saint for whose sake I came here a pilgrim. *Benedictus* . . . My saint, my name. A world so near us. Latin West and Greek East are much nearer to one another than

many might think. Cassian, the unknown Master of the *Regula*, Benedict, Gregory the Great, saints and fathers of the universal Church dear to the Greek as well as to the Latin. Romans of the same Roman Empire of the Basils, the Antonys, the Chrysostoms. Motley wisdom of God !

But *Franciscus* ? Who is this ? What strange name is that ?

Franks, Charlemagne, Francia, Western Empires, barbarian kings—so far, so far. . . Unknown, strange, foreign. Neither Greek nor Latin. Not our Rome. No more. Cluny ? Sorbonne ? Perhaps, perhaps. . . Who knows ? Franks ! Francis !

Just a moment ago, in the other room, I saw Innocent III. Granting to Subiaco ecclesiastical privileges, clean-shaven, young, supercilious. Hildebrandine Papacy. Wretched crusaders attacking the City of Constantine—second Jerusalem on earth. Innocent III, the persecutor of my own Church of Cyprus. Proud and perfidious Roman See, however disfigured I can still recognize you. . .

The monk who serves as a guide says something. ‘The earliest known portrait of S. Francis . . .’. I don’t hear him. What on earth has this Francis to do with this place ? In the very heart of the *familia S. Benedicti*. I thought of myself as a member of this family, and here is a brother whom I don’t know ! *Frater Franciscus*.

‘The roses of S. Francis’. I knew of the thorns of S. Benedict. I had read Gregory’s *Dialogues*. Sharp thorns reminding one of the burning Egyptian Thebaid. But now these roses ? Francis transformed S. Benedict’s thorns into roses ! ‘Typical of you, son of France’, I think, and I proceed to see the roses.

I confess they are beautiful. Up there, in the midst of those frightful rocks that only S. Benedict’s prayers hold back from the heads of his sons, a balcony of roses. Francis, you never lost your mother’s elegance. It is beautiful. Roses on the rock.

The rock. The Church built on Peter’s confession. But the Church is life, and life cannot be represented by a rock. An orthodox theologian once compared the Church to ‘a tree blooming on the rock’.

The roses. Symbolic of love divine. The same love that made Benedict throw himself onto the thorns in order to defeat carnal love. It was Benedict who planted the roses. Francis revealed them to a

Church obsessed with the rock and the thorns. '*Seule la rose est assez fragile pour exprimer l'Eternité*',¹ said the mystic poet.

Francis refused to accept the Rule of S. Benedict. Yet the earliest representation of him is to be found in Benedict's house. How would Benedict see Innocent III and Francis in his house? I wonder. I am sure he would not like either Innocent or his privileges, with which he spoilt Subiaco. But certainly he would like Francis. I am not sure he would approve of what is known as 'the Franciscan piety', but, I think, he would like brother Francis, and he would try to persuade him to accept the Rule. He would treat him as a son of the Church of Innocent III. This makes all the difference. . .

For Francis belongs to the Western Church of the late twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries. He cannot be properly understood except in the light (or the shadow) of the Hildebrandine Papacy and its magnificent Suleiman, Innocent III. ('We are the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, but we are not his vicar, nor the vicar of any man or Apostle, but the vicar of Jesus Christ Himself . . .'). How else could one understand his passion for Lady Poverty, or, again, his love for the Crucified?

I look at him again. Little poor man, humble, secretly joyful, without the stigmata. Frater Franciscus. Who painted him? A Benedictine who loved him? He loved and was loved. Few hated him, some despised him. More among his friars than among the monks.

Francis was a living sign himself. That is why he cannot be classified. A sign is always something unique. *Signifer Christi*, crying in the desert . . . He loved the deserts and the abandoned churches. Was he searching for something in those old abandoned churches? His Lord was there, not in the used ones. What is the meaning of this? What is the mystery of this nostalgic wandering about deserted churches? *Pro amore Christi*. He found Christ there, his crucified Christ, not the glorious risen one. The crucifix of San Damiano becomes animated and says three times: 'Francis, go, repair my church, which is falling in ruins, as you see'. Is it not the same with the dream of Innocent? To repair a church which is falling into ruins one always has to prop it up with one's own back. This is what Francis did. To a Church tempted with the riches of this world he

¹ 'Only the rose is delicate enough to express Eternity'.

opposed Christ's absolute poverty. To prelates and abbots very proud of their honour he remonstrated with his absolute refusal to accept ecclesiastical privilege. To a desiccated and arid theology he answered with his absolute renunciation of all human learning and intellectual values. With these three demands Francis tried to repair the Church which was about to fall, and both succeeded and failed. Renunciation of riches, honour, and learning is something too absolute, and so too perplexing . . . '*Nudus nudum Christum sequi*'.²

In Francis we see a return to the primitive Christianity of the Acts. A phenomenon not rare in the history of monasticism, both in the East and in the West. But what is more characteristic of Francis is his *compassio passionis Christi*.³ It is not only the stigmata of his body. His heart was stigmatized long before Alverna. Along with all the saints, ever since S. Ignatius of Antioch, Francis dies with his Christ, *Christo concrucifixus*. Is this not the monk of all times and place? Simeon Stylites was seven years old when the Lord appeared to him. He asked him: 'Lord, how did they crucify thee?'. The Lord stretched out His arms and said: 'Thus did they crucify me; but it was my desire. And do thou crucify thyself with me every day'. Yet Francis's itinerary is not that of the saints of the previous centuries, either western or eastern. Somehow the resurrection of Christ is not revealed in his body . . .

I watch him and try to decipher his enigma. But the Francis of Subiaco is not the Francis of Alverna. He does not yet bear the stigmata. It is the Francis of Bevagna rather, preaching to the birds. How eastern, how Greek is this aspect of Francis, this consciousness of God and the world, God in the world, the world in God. For the Latin Fathers what really exists is 'God and my soul'. And yet, here again, Francis appears as the child of his age. This lyrical preaching is so much part of the spirit of western medieval romance, it irresistibly reminds me of 'the second feudal age'. Francis—the troubadour of God singing the beauties of his *Bela*, Lady Poverty . . . This indeed is what makes Francis so ambiguous to an Eastern Christian—and at the same time so fascinating. He is so much a child of his age. Who can understand the *Poverello* separated from the Poor Men of Lyons? Francis belongs to his time in a very embarrassing way. Still, he transcends it. Think of his new ideal of converting the Saracens

² 'Naked, I follow the naked Christ'.

³ Capacity to share in the suffering of Christ.

instead of conquering them. How much more Christian ! And his main lesson is of a universal value, a perpetual nuisance to those men who, always, find the way to install themselves on the Cross quite comfortably. A perennial reminder also that there is no other chair of theology except of the Cross.

His sense of the presence of God in the creation inspires his *Cantico delle creature*. And Francis is not only the Francis of Monte La Verna. We must remember that he is also the great transfigured saint with the sign *taw* on his forehead, marked with a luminous cross. In this he is in the succession of all those transfigured in the light of God ever since Tabor. S. Benedict would have difficulty in understanding the *Cantico*—the same difficulty that the East has to this day in understanding Francis. But do not the sermon of Bevagno and the Canticle express the same experience as Benedict's vision of the world immersed in light ? S. Gregory Palamas writing in the XIVth century in defence of the holy hesychasts would appeal (against Barlaam the Calabrian) to the vision of S. Benedict, as related by Gregory the Great. (Note the sensitiveness of the Greek translation by Gregory's successor, Pope Zacharias, at this point). Uncreated divine grace penetrating the whole universe . . . Is this not the feeling of Francis ? The same sense that makes Bonaventure the favourite scholastic of Orthodox theologians. The theophanic character of Nature, the unity of Truth and the unique way to it, the renunciation of the intellect.

I think of the Francis of Alverna. The frightening appearance of the seraph, the terror of the saint, his joy and his sadness. And when the vision disappears, Francis sealed with the stigmata. Henceforward, for two more years, he will have his half-dead body carried on the back of an ass through the villages and castles 'exhorting others to accept Christ's cross and to direct themselves in the ways of peace'. A long martyrdom of ineffable pain and jubilation. Bonaventure, in his *Legenda maior*, thought that in the form of the seraphim it was Christ who appeared to the saint. In the light of the Eastern tradition one is drawn to question this interpretation. Several Orthodox writers have been astonished and disturbed to hear of a Christ crucified borne by a seraph. The idea that even in his glory, enthroned on seraphim, Christ is crucified seems unacceptable to the mystical theology of the East. But it must be noted that the seraph held in his wings, not Christ crucified, but an image of the Crucified, either a cross or an icon of the crucifixion. The vision in itself has nothing

strange about it, I think, and can be compared to the story of the cherub which, according to the Coptic life of S. Macarius of Egypt, appeared to him, 'took the measure of his chest and crucified him on the earth'. What is unknown to the Church, both of the East and of the West, before Francis, is the result of the vision: the stigmata. The glorification of the body, its sanctification and transfiguration, its deification along with the soul's, is known from Egypt to Sarov. But this special stigmatization of the body of some western saints which has occurred ever since Francis is completely unknown to the undivided Church of the first ten or twelve centuries. Did they bear on themselves the signs of the sin of broken love? Was their Church unable to lead them to the mystery of the Resurrection? The whole approach of Francis to Christ . . . was it not somehow 'external'? Does one not 'imitate' somebody external to oneself? (Though here Francis is, of course, the heir of the Cistercian spirituality). Was the Spirit unable to work fully in this Church, to offer her the risen One? Was Christ at the right hand of the Father overshadowed by Jesus of Galilee 'known after the flesh'? How to imitate One whose members we have become through the Holy Spirit? I suddenly remembered that the only dogmatic question which divided East and West was pneumatology, summarized under the formula of *Filioque*. A different doctrine of the Spirit, and so of grace and of the Church.

I looked at Francis again. I was tempted to say something. But deep in my heart I heard a meek voice, saying 'Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? To his own lord he standeth or falleth' (Rom. 14 : 4). Was it Francis's voice? Was it Benedict's? It was the voice of my Church rather. There was Francis, standing humble and lowly, a loving poor man begging his way, begging for God. What judgement can be passed on the poor in spirit? I loved him, though I could not understand him. In the chapel nearby the Benedictines were singing, '*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est . . .*'.⁴ And there is the Church, I thought, and there is the Spirit, *et omnis gratia*.

'What is your message for us Orthodox?', I asked.

And the answer came the same: '*Eius qui nos multum amavit, multum est Amor amandus*'.⁵

SELWYN COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

BENEDICT ENGLEZAKIS.

⁴ 'Where there is charity and love, there is God . . . '.

⁵ 'Much to be loved is the Love of him who loved us much'.

Franciscan Spirituality



IT might be said that no understanding of Christian Spirituality is possible apart from a profound awareness of Christ himself. The same is no less true in terms of Franciscan Spirituality. It sometimes seems as if Francis alone, of all men in the Christian tradition, has achieved the same worldwide appeal and recognition as his Master—both in the West, and to some degree, in the East. To understand the spiritual power which lies behind that attraction it is necessary first to look at the man himself.

S. Francis

The problem of arriving at some idea of S. Francis is not that we have too little information—but so much! He was only forty-four when he died, and by then he had a following of thousands, which had spread throughout Europe, challenging and disturbing the settled monastic life. He was already acknowledged a saint by popular acclaim, and soon his biographers were busy writing the correct versions of his life, and disagreeing, sometimes violently, about what was written. The same disagreement emerges in his portraits. There is one reputed to have been painted in his lifetime at Subiaco which suggests a sternness wholly lacking from the gentle picture of Cimabue in the lower church at Assisi, or the rather heavy though heavenly Giotto's in the upper church—much as the book by Kazantzakis, *God's Pauper*, gives a very different picture from the many, sometimes rather sentimental, lives of the Saint which are produced virtually every year. You can identify Francis with any cause, case or crisis—the Unity of the Church, the United Nations, Hippies, Samaritans, Shelter, Apartheid, Missions, Leprosy, War on Want. S. Clare, his closest follower, is now the patron saint of television. There are Franciscan Hermits, Contemplatives, Teachers, Preachers, Welfare Workers, Scholars—married and unmarried, rich and poor. They are all 'Franciscans', and would say they derive their spiritual life directly from what they see in the life of the 'little poor man of Assisi'. What they hope to have in common with him is this—the freshness, spontaneity, downright recklessness and abandonment, yet clear assurance of the Gospel.

S. Francis was determined at all points to point all men to Christ. He was not merely evangelical, but an evangelist. What is both

lovable and frightening about him is his utter sanity, total commitment and complete abandonment to Christ in a wholly integrated and entirely human personality. It's a bit too much ! And yet it is so near you can almost touch it—certainly near enough to desire it. In other words, the secret of Franciscan Spirituality seems to be no secret at all ; it is the revelation of the overwhelming power of Christ in a particular life wholly converted and given to God—and, therefore, to the world. Nevertheless, because this happened to a particular person, in time and place, the events of his conversion (as of ours) have their significance. At this point, fortunately, the biographers tend to agree on the facts, even though they differ in their interpretation of them. There are four in particular :

The experience as a young man when, in the middle of a party in Assisi, he found himself thinking and speaking of poverty—poverty as a Bride, something to be married to, as you would a wife. This was surprising in the aspiring son of a rich merchant, notorious for living and loving the good life.

The experience of meeting a leper on a lonely road, and finding himself compelled to love him to the point of kissing him and caring for him. This seems to have been crucial—his final Testament begins with a reminder of it to his brothers.

The moment when, praying before an Icon of the Crucified Christ, it seemed that Christ told him to leave everything and build his Church.

And fourthly, the day when he heard the Gospel read in which Christ sent out his Apostles saying 'The Kingdom of Heaven is upon you. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out devils. You received without cost ; give without charge. Provide no gold, silver, or copper to fill your purse, no pack for the road, no second coat, no shoes, no stick ; the worker earns his keep' (Matthew 10, 8—10, NEB). To Francis this was the ultimate challenge—a personal message—an absolute command, demanding absolute obedience. It was his response to that command which created the Order of Friars, the most significant single influence in the Church of his time, and for centuries after.

Let us consider these events—because between them, they reveal the bases of Franciscan Spirituality which seem to me to be, and I confess they sound rather naive, his profound love for Creation, for Man, and for God.

His Love for Creation

Poverty for Francis was a radical concept, and, as in all he said and did, an affirmation of truth, not a denial of possession. S. Paul in II Cor. 6, 4—10 says 'Penniless we own the world'—That is the Franciscan way. He was no fool—he knew perfectly well that it is easier for a rich man to be poor than a poor man. When he stripped himself naked before the Bishop in Assisi, renouncing his home, father, money, friends, everything—and stepped out naked into the world, it was only to become as rich as Adam before the fall. It is true that later he preached to the birds, called animals his brothers and sisters, sang that great poem to Creation which is one of the glories of the Franciscan tradition—extolling as it does the unity of God with his created world—but he lived in a world where literal poverty was as great a reality as in the streets of Calcutta today, and was part of a Church which had the same struggle over possessions as the Church of today. What emerged in him was a profound distrust of money and personal possessions of *any* kind. In his deeper self he was aware of a world shot through with the glory and the presence of God. He was a romantic, a troubadour, a poet—and, therefore, a paradox. And it is only in paradoxical terms you will ever discern the ultimate truths in which Franciscan Spirituality can be expressed. G. K. Chesterton says, 'S. Francis was not a lover of nature, properly understood a lover of nature is precisely what he was not. The phrase implies accepting the material universe as a vague environment, a sort of sentimental pantheism . . . For Francis nothing was ever in the background ; we might say that his mind had no background except, perhaps, that Divine darkness out of which the Divine Love had called up every coloured creature one by one . . . In a word, we talk about a man who cannot see the wood for the trees. S. Francis was a man who didn't want to see the wood for the trees—he wanted to see each tree as a separate, almost a sacred thing. S. Francis was a mystic, but he believed in mysticism, not mystification. As a mystic, he was the enemy of all those mystics who melt away the edges of things and dissolve an entity into its environment. It is an example of the extremes that meet, that the 'little poor man' who had stripped himself to nothing took the same title that had been the wild vaunt of the vanity of the gorgeous Asiatic autocrat and called himself the Brother of the Sun and Moon'.

The world, in every possible expression of its being, did not merely

remind him of its Creator, but identified him with God present in his Creation, and by a process of exchange shared it.

His Love for Man

It is against this background that we might consider the second facet of his spirituality—his love for Man, or more precisely, his love for Christ as Man and, as a direct and absolute consequence, his love for all men in Christ. All men individually—whether it was the Pope or the priest, the Sultan or the sinner—but in particular the poor—whether they happened to be rich or not ! There are a number of popular devotions that spring from a Franciscan source—the Christmas Crib, the Stations of the Cross, the Angelus—all extolling the Incarnation in one way or another. One day the Headmaster of our School for mal-adjusted boys was with me at the Friary and, as the Angelus was rung, we, being rather old-fashioned, stood still and said it. When it was finished, he said to me, ‘ Odd thing—at the School we ring the Angelus to mark the end of morning school, so instead of silence there is immediate noise, the running of feet, and a shouting ’. If this seems a trivial example, it is only meant to suggest that the Incarnation was, for S. Francis, the celebration of Man. I think Francis would have joined in the rush of boys liberated from the school room—because that is what the artificial solemnity of the ‘ Angelus ’ is all about—the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The understanding of the incarnate Christ and all that led from it has a sharp and burning reality. The Collect of S. Francis begins ‘ O God, who ever delightest to reveal thyself to the child-like and lowly of heart ’. Francis always went to the heart of the matter ; and so in his dealing with men there was always room for sentiment but never room for the sentimental, always room for the sinner but a bewildering hesitancy for the saintly. The story of the leper makes the point. It is comparatively easy for us to feel sentiment for lepers—after all, most of us never see them—and there can be an element of romantic illusion about the idea of Francis kissing the leper. Kazantzakis puts it more clearly : When Brother Leo tries to persuade Francis to avoid the lepers, he says, ‘ There will be a leper on every road we take ’. The book then goes on to describe Francis meeting, embracing and kissing this leper whose ‘ lips were an oozing wound ’. Francis gathers the leper in his arms. Later, in bewilderment and joy, he says to Leo : ‘ This, Brother Leo, is what I understood : all lepers, cripples, sinners . . . all these if you kiss them—O God forgive me for saying

this . . . they all become Christ'. You have to face the fact of being and caring *where you are*. Francis recognised, to a degree which has rarely been equalled, the truth that Christ is to be seen in every man. From that moment he lived for that man—and every man was another moment of the same truth. Poor and rich alike !

His Love for God

Thirdly, it was one of the rich that gave Francis the opportunity for the deepest realisation of his union with Christ, which is at the heart of Franciscan Spirituality, and that is the Cross. A rich man offered him the gift of a mountain, and only a really poor man could freely and joyfully accept so great a gift. Towards the end of his life, Francis went to his mountain, La Verna, to make a Retreat. That time of prayer was to unify his life—and the point of union was the Cross. At the beginning, which is his conversion, he prayed before the crude picture of the Crucified in the ruined church of S. Damiano, below Assisi. It was the crucified Christ who sent him out to rebuild the Church. This led to the life of poverty, preaching and prayer. Through it all there lived a devotion to the Passion of Christ as the true point of re-birth for man. Not, perhaps, that he would have put it that way ; but to suppose that Franciscan Spirituality has any reality apart from the Passion is to avoid the whole point. The seal on the life of Francis is the Stigmata received in prayer on the mountain. It can be dismissed, explained, even excused on psychological and emotional grounds, but the fact is that *it is there*, and, popular devotion apart, cannot be regarded as anything less than entirely congruous with the rest of his life. Whatever else the Franciscan movement became (and let us admit that the Friars betrayed their origins even more terribly than any other Order for, having so much more to gain, they had as much more to lose), in the beginning they were the Order committed by Francis out of his own experience to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. As a consequence, the Franciscans, as Francis conceived them, were to be an Order of Penitents ; living lives of loving reconciliation.

There is one other moment in his life which requires recollection. The point came when he was confronted with a radical choice—to retire from the world and, in the conventional phrase, give his life to prayer, or to go on living an active life of poverty, preaching, prayer and the active care of others. This agonising decision was made for him at his own request by his brethren and sisters, and he went on.

It is, perhaps, the principle reason why it is so difficult to define Franciscan Spirituality.

Even before he died, the world moved in. There were the organisers who created great friaries, the scholars, the gradual, though rapid, dissipation of the ideal, all the more terrible because so much of it was magnificent. That is another story—but a very significant one because it blurs the picture. All the Orders produced notable saints, martyrs, mystics. The Franciscan ideal inspired Dante, Jacopone da Toddi, S. Bonaventura, King Louis, artists, architects, missionaries. The greatest monuments of all are in Assisi itself, the superb basilica which covers the Saint, and the tiny Church of the Portiuncula, the Little Portion—crouching beneath the vast church built to protect it. Great Orders that, in the end, seemed little different from all the rest, producing great monuments that are in the end, for all their beauty, an apparent travesty of the truth.

A Valid Franciscan Spirituality for Today

I suppose that Franciscan Spirituality should include some idea of how men might live a life towards God, informed by the insight of the Franciscan tradition. Then here is a question : what, if anything, is different about a specifically *Franciscan* spirituality? In any case different from what? Benedictine, Ignatian, Quaker, Methodist, Orthodox—or for that matter, Moslem, Buddhist or Hindu! Why do men look to Francis rather than to some other saint?—What particular magic is there in the word Franciscan? It would be easiest to say 'None at all'. But that won't quite do. For what it is worth, I would say this :

(a) You cannot really live until you are prepared to die. One of the most striking sayings of Francis occurs in his *Canticle of the Sun*. There is so much in it of the praise of the created world we almost miss the concluding phrase, added by Francis when he was near to his own death : ' Praised be my Lord God for Sister the death of the body from which no man escapeth '. Death, as Ladislaus Boros has pointed out, is the moment of truth. The uncomfortable, terrifying, yet glorifying truth which Francis discovered again and again. Death to his family when he stripped himself, death to his fear when he kissed the leper, death to possession, death to sin, death to self. His identification of himself with the Death of Christ on the Cross meant liberation for the possession of the whole world, in an eternal life of risen glory. His

devotion to the Sacrament, his honouring of priests, his determination to protect the Church, his fear of the insecure world which pins its hopes on buildings or power, his love of peace, above all, his love of the poor—all sprang from this recognition. So every sacrament is an involvement in death and life ; in every prayer we die—indeed, the ultimate moments of prayer, which are expressed, for want of better words, as union with Christ, are a real death, and life in death. Franciscan Spirituality is unique only in this, that it draws the whole of creation in all its infinite diversity of expression, into an eternal and continuous evolution of life and death.

Practically speaking, it means that nothing is impossible. At one extreme a man or woman might live the life of a hermit or contemplative nun, drawing the world's need into the defined channel of the apparently restricted round of place and time, prayer, Divine Office, silence, stillness, limitation. At the other extreme, men and women will pray as they give themselves to the care of alcoholics, prisoners, the deprived, aged, lonely, desperate.

And between them, embracing them, are men and women who celebrate in their daily lives the wonder of creation, yet strive to overcome the desolate wastes that man creates through war, over-population, pollution, selfishness, greed, pride, fear, conflict, division and despair.

The tragedy of Franciscanism is that, in its determination to live, it compromised with the world. It is, perhaps, a striking testimony to truth that the first flowerings of the Franciscan spirit in the Anglican Church have all died, and been prepared to die, to live again—S.D.C., B.H.C., C.P.S.S., O.S.F.—and now, perhaps, S.S.F.—we, too, must live as men who are prepared to die.

Dying is, however, hardly an exclusive occupation, neither is there anything very special about the way of Saint Francis. His name occurs repeatedly in the history of men in the Religious Life who were prepared to die—Francis Xavier, Francis de Sales, the inspiration of the Curé d'Ars, and of Charles de Foucauld. But the roots lie further back. S. Paul says, ' as dying and, behold, we live, as having nothing and yet possessing all things ' ; and at the foundation, our Lord says, ' Blessed are the poor . . . for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven '.

(b) Though I am naturally concerned to discern a valid Franciscan Spirituality for today, I know that if I try too hard I shall lose it in any

case. I tend to think there is no such thing—or rather, you can't put it that way. Yet I feel committed to at least trying.

First, there is the fact of recognition. Christ has *already* given us life—his own life—‘I live, nevertheless, not I but Christ liveth in me’. This is the present fact ; you cannot be proud of it, or humble about it. It just *is*. It is the starting point that changes everything else. Everything you do is an affirmation or denial of this event. You *died*, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Whatever particular pattern of prayer or way of life you live, this remains a truth, the awareness of which continually liberates us and sets us free. Francis knew that.

But free for what ? Free, first of all, to recognise Christ in others, to see them in a new way as well—to Francis they really were Brothers and Sisters in whom, because Christ once lived on earth, Christ still lives on earth. ‘In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me’—Francis knew that.

Free to possess the world—and therefore, free from the sort of things which tie us to the world. Free to live for ever at the point of the world's need. Free to see the proportion and truth as well as the pain and passion of events, and, entering into them, to share them. Free to acknowledge a new Community in Love which shares a recognition of the redemptive power of God, beginning with ourselves just where we are. Franciscan life is never far from family life. Yet at the same time Francis distrusted the large fixed groups. There was always with him a sense of a family on the move—like gypsies or a circus—indeed, they both seem rather Franciscan to me !

The truth is there is no technique, but there *is* an environment, and it won't change. When Francis married Lady Poverty, he had no intention of entertaining the plea of divorce either for himself or for anyone who wanted to share such a vow. The Abbé Pierre, Mother Teresa, Adderley, William, Andrew, Douglas, Algy, and others far less notable, know that we have the poor with us always—and even when the Third World has caught up, passed and conquered the First and Second Worlds, man will remain impoverished by his greed and denial of God in creation. To share the poverty of Christ is to share the riches of Christ—but it involves living at the point of the reconciliation and redemption of man with God, which is the Cross. Just there, and it can be anywhere, is where Franciscan Spirituality might begin to live in any one of us.

God's Fools

Some Thoughts on Franciscan Vocation



A PRATFALL is a landing on the prat, and you can guess what that is. To say that you had sat down rather heavily would be an understatement. It is sometimes used of a humiliating blunder or experience, but in my experience it is used of those rather disastrous 'accidents' that occur to clowns. These are contrived, of course, and the effect is achieved by the humiliation of the victim, but there's one thing that the audience sees and another that happens to the performer. The fall is done for the sake of effect, and done properly it produces it, but looking at it through different eyes you substantiate different awareness. To the audience it is a comic turn, apparently painless because apparently efficient, borne along by its own inevitableness and by its own accompanying patter. That patter is either comic or tragic, but in essence the act itself is tragic. It is not mere gymnastics, mere buffoonery, it is truth. The little man, the big man, the clever man, the foolish man, falls down, is brought down, loses his dignity, not by his own ineptitude (though that is part of it) but by fate. It is part of the story, part of the truth, that fate demands the downfall. So the audience sees it. And the performer, the actor, the victim—is it so painless to be so fooled and so foolish, to be the butt, the example, the sacrifice? No, to him in comedy or tragedy the heart *is* broken. For the sake of the whole the act must be perfect, but part of that perfectness is to hide the pain. The pain must be there but it must not be seen to be real pain, but without real pain the supposed pain is mere mockery. The effect can only be achieved at its true cost, but the effect will be spoilt if the true cost is revealed, for then the audience will not respond with laughter but turn away in terror.

But who has the last laugh? The price of the laugh is the humbling of the fool, but there is a sequel to the act. The downed stands up and wreaks revenge. The fool rises and defeats his adversary. The butt is reignited, the sacrifice reborn. The victim becomes the priest and the priest the victim. Revenge is sweet, we are assured, though that is not always true, but revenge is the conclusion and it gets the last laugh.

Last summer it was possible for me to visit Assisi in order to act as chaplain to Anglicans visiting the city. I looked forward to the

visit, for not only did I know the beauty and *mana* of the city itself, and I was to go with three of my brothers, but also I knew myself to be approaching a watershed in my life. The restructuring of the Province which has since taken place was approaching, and although I knew that the work I had been doing over the last few years was coming to an end, I was not sure what the future would hold. I had ideas, of course, and wishes, and I hoped that this visit to Assisi would be both a beautiful climax to one period of my life and a benison for the next. I set store by it ; I expected things of it ; I had visions of the beauty and light and joy that would be mine in that place where Francis had been beauty and light and joy.

But it was not to be. Assisi was oppressively hot, our lodgings were on one of the narrow main streets and were incredibly noisy, all the Franciscan shrines were a continuous babel of sound and movement ; behind the outward facade of beauty, light and joy, was a hurdy-gurdy of heat, movement and noise. It was impossible and it was disappointing, until, that is, I saw the truth. The truth was that I was trying to dictate the terms of the blessing which I hoped to receive. The result of my blindness was a spiritual pratfall, a humiliation. It was almost as if fate had tripped me up, knocked me down. But, as in the pratfall experience, the performance moved to its necessary conclusion, revenge, if you like, or if you don't like, resurrection. For in a strange and subtle way new life was created, the butt was reignited.

What happened was that I realised that I was going about it the wrong way ! That instead of looking for light and joy and beauty I should have been looking for the cross, for it was the cross that I found. I had hoped, perhaps, for a transfiguration but instead had found a crucifixion. I had hoped, perhaps, for Greccio and the light of Christ in incarnation but instead had come to La Verna and the Stigmata. For the truth is that the Franciscan vocation is not a seeking after beauty, light and joy, but a confrontation with our crucified Lord, Jesus Christ. It is not the escape to a beautiful imagined presence but communication with the one who meets you in the heat and movement and noise, not Jesus serene on the mountainside, mouthing beautiful sayings and extending slender hands in blessing, but Jesus faint from carrying his cross, sweating and bleeding on his way to Calvary, immersed in the heat and movement and noise. That visit to Assisi became as it were a Holy Week, moving from the uncertainties and difficulties of Palm Sunday through to Gethsemane,

to Good Friday and Easter itself. Moving from darkness to death and from death to life. But to a life only valid *because* there had been a death.

If one is to discuss Franciscan vocation today, then it must be done against the background of Francis and his experience of Christ. The Franciscan way has no merit in itself, it is merely a particular way of living Christ, a particular emphasis or extraction of the essence of the gospel, an obedience to a certain view of Christ. As such it is a highly personal experience and expression of Christ, and as such there cannot be regimented norms, definitions or regulations, but only principles, attitudes, guidelines. It is necessary to establish this early on as Franciscanism covers a wide spectrum and it cannot be narrowed down. And this is why Franciscan vocation can be lived out with equal validity in many forms of life, in all three orders, each member responding essentially to the Franciscan vocation given by God, and each vocation having its own integrity in its own obedience to God.

The first thing which Francis wished to establish as his brotherhood developed was its difference from contemporary forms of the religious life. Its life was to be an unstructured following of the gospel. It was to be an expression of the immanence of God, in contrast with the monastic communities which seemed to express only transcendence. It was to be something which permeated ordinary life rather than something which overlaid it. Francis was no status-seeker, unless you count his intention to have only the lowest status as that. Influence was not to be wielded through numbers, scholarship, reputation, or in any other way than the way of Christ, and that way was the way of love expressed in prayer and service. It was to be merely and simply a living out of the great commandment, the response Jesus made to the question 'Which is the great commandment in the law?'. His answer was, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbour as yourself'. (Matthew 22 : 36—39). But to do that, to say that, is the supreme understatement, and to be that in simplicity is paradoxically so hard. But that was the vocation of Francis, to love God with all his being and to love his neighbour with all his being and in the one to find the other and in the other to find the One who is all Being. And that is essentially Franciscan vocation today, loving God in prayer

and service, our prayer stimulating and fulfilling our service, and our service stimulating and fulfilling our prayer.

But Francis took it further than that ! He not only had principles, he lived them out. And some of his principles need a new emphasis. For example, the Franciscan needs to examine his relationship to the church. Francis was always a loyal churchman, he accepted with few questions the ecclesiastical system of the day. He was concerned, in fact, to be recognised as a churchman and wished his brothers to be such, for fear that they might be confused with the Humiliati or other sectarians of his day. But Francis was also uncompromising in his belief that the ecclesiastical machine had in some way distanced itself from the ordinary person, it had become too bureaucratic, too concerned with Law and Propriety, not enough with Love and Poverty, with communication with the ordinary. Francis wanted to give Christ back to the masses, not by taking Christ out of the church, but by revealing the Christ hidden within the church. The scandal was not that Christ was absent from the church but that he was locked within it, hidden away by theological and liturgical trappings. The same is so often true of the church today, the practising Christian is almost overwhelmed with procedural and liturgical reform, so much so that his church life becomes a sort of 'keeping up with the Joneses'. It is also true of any growing and developing organisation such as our Society. Now it is not that procedural or liturgical or any other sort of reform is not necessary, but that the discussion of it, the elucidation of it, the communication of it, sometimes defeats its purpose. It always requires means to attain an end, but so often the church has confused the former with the latter. Franciscans should always endeavour to identify their aims and not to get lost on the road to achieving them.

And Franciscans need to deepen their sense of commitment to God, for an essential of Franciscan vocation is faith. The Franciscan has to be so utterly convinced of the reality of God as revealed in Jesus Christ that he accepts the strange and unknown ways of God. Paradoxically, to be utterly convinced does not always remove uncertainty, but conviction assures that stable basis which enables the person to suffer life, to live under God without trying to manipulate God. The Franciscan does not know what the future holds, for he has to be obedient to the continual inspirations of the Holy Spirit ; to plan, to define, to set targets, can be his downfall. And this faith

expressed in obedience demands trust in the providence of God. There are plenty of things you can say about Franciscan poverty, but the essence of it is trust in that providence of God. Francis required three things of his brothers in this respect, first, that they should work hard ; second, that they should not take alms which should rightly be devoted to the poor ; third, that they should accept graciously what was given to them and not complain about what was not given to them. In everything Francis saw the hand of God, God immanent in his creation ; and he wished his brothers to realise that as well. Francis wanted to take the ordinary and to consecrate it to God, or rather, to realise its inherent goodness. The consecration of the ordinary denied élitism and encouraged brotherhood, each person was to be accepted for himself.

But all this was to lead to the pratfall which is at the heart of Franciscan vocation. Every Franciscan is called to be God's fool, to be he who for the sake of effect suffers humiliation, and for the sake of effect conceals its agony ; but without which agony the effect is sterilised, but with which agony displayed the world turns away in terror. Franciscan vocation is to dare all, but to make it look easy, so that all may be drawn through the crucified Christ to God. Franciscan vocation is not avoiding life's Holy Weeks but entering into them with faith and love so that the resurrection may be not only real, but apparent to the world in which we live.

ALNMOUTH.

GILES S.S.F.

Early Days in Dorset

TO this day I have never discovered who it was sent me a newspaper cutting about a small community in Dorset which was endeavouring to help young tramps. It was during the onset of the great depression of the 1930's when there were swarms of men of all ages wandering from casual ward to casual ward and common lodging houses, many of them homeless, some genuinely seeking work, some just wandering. The response in me, who always had an instinctive sympathy with the under-dogs, and moreover had long felt the attraction to an open religious community life, was immediate, and there could be no peace until I had seen the place for myself, which, furthermore, had Saint Francis of Assisi as patron ; he whom I revered above all saints.

A friend agreed to motor me there from Sussex, and we arrived on a Saturday afternoon. In a letter dated 2 June, 1930, I wrote : ' The Home is over three miles from Evershot, and we went through winding narrow lanes and had to keep asking the way and it is seemingly the most isolated spot in England . . . When we arrived Brother Douglas was away and I asked for Brother de Winton and was told he was at tea with the cricketers. He was brought out to us and made us very welcome and invited us to share the repast. We went in and sat at a long table with the resident and visiting players. Huge enamelled mugs and plates, and bread and margarine and strong sweet tea. No table-cloths but scrubbed wooden tables (too workhousy, thought I sniffing and not at all favourably impressed). After tea we went to see the end of the cricket match, " our side " being defeated. You would not wonder if you saw what wrecks some of them were, only recently come off the roads '.

Brother de Winton was one of the players, and after the match asked to be excused and soon re-appeared in his Franciscan garb—a brown cassock and a crucifix by his side attached to his girdle. All the time I knew him I never saw him dressed in anything else but a cassock and/or cricket shirt and flannels. He showed us round the buildings and grounds until Brother Douglas arrived and took us in hand. It was he who showed us the Chapel, plainly and simply furnished apart from a gorgeous altar frontal which had been presented to the Brothers and covered a stencilled one on canvas which they had originally. He apologised for it and also for some expensive candle-sticks which were likewise a gift from a well-wisher.

The vegetable gardens were in pretty good shape and produced a quantity of food for the house and sometimes surpluses which Brother Douglas took to market in a ramshackle car. Work was the keynote of the place and every fit person was expected to muck in at whatever was going on. Every effort was made to encourage the production of things which could be sold for the financial benefit of the Home—and especially handicrafts with a therapeutic value. There was woodwork and printing, poultry keeping and various branches of horticulture, and handloom weaving. This latter was of particular interest to me, who was wearing one of my handwoven jackets, and when Brother Douglas told me they had recently lost their weaver and were praying for another, he added that I must be the answer. This was my first introduction to his boundless faith in prayer, and though I have said that work was the keynote of the place, this was probably only because the work-life was more obvious than the prayer-life. Indeed with Brother Douglas the two were inseparable. He could pray while hoeing the turnips as well as when kneeling in a pew, and at times I believe he was not altogether pleased when Office bell sounded and he downed tools to go to chapel, thus interrupting the manual work. Others have mentioned that he was often late. These are memories of long ago and must not give the impression that he was anything less than a man of prayer. It would be more true to say that his belief in it was such as to be continuous, and not dependent upon reminders or outer props. When I was in charge of the Cornish Home he stayed with us overnight before our proposed chapel was furnished, let alone consecrated, and he celebrated mass with a frontal-less table as altar, pieces of bread from a kitchen plate and Hall's tonic wine cadged from a neighbouring farmer. It was one of the most moving services of my life.

To be told that one is an answer to prayer is an awesome thing and before my friend and I left the Friary next day my mind was made up—providing I could make the needful domestic arrangements I would be back as quickly as possible . . . And so it was I had the great privilege of sharing in the work of those early days of the Brotherhood at what was known interchangeably and haphazardly as the Batcombe, Evershot, Cerne Abbas or Hilfield Home. Perhaps this was indicative of the position of the Brotherhood itself at that time, which was not easily definable.

The tall, gaunt, serious looking figure of Brother Douglas was a contrast to that of Brother de Winton, who was shorter, rotund in body and with a round smiling face and florid complexion. The other two 'foundation members' as they might be called were Brother Charles (Preston) well-built and with a thoughtful face, but always ready with a joke or pun and Brother Kenneth, the smallest of the four, quiet and reserved and the only one now left on earth.

The principle of equality, which was typified at the communal meals partaken of in the same room by wayfarers, staff and visitors, was acted upon throughout all the activities of the Home. There was no preferential treatment for the professed brothers, long term residents or visitors and the word 'Brother', applied to all and sundry, really meant something. We all had the same kind of food, accommodation, recreation, times for rising and retiring, same hours of work except that the 'staff members' were, in a sense, never off duty—always on call, and Brothers Douglas and Charles were often away on speaking or preaching engagements.

These were very difficult days for the Brotherhood financially and the utmost economy was observed. I well remember Brother Douglas blowing up one young fellow because he had helped himself to too much salt at one meal. He did not mind how much he ate but could not bear the waste of even a few grains of salt left on the side of the plate. On another occasion he appealed to men who had been there over three months to move on as the burden of keeping them all was beyond the resources of the Home. Economies were effected by curtailing marmalade, spreading bread and marge in the kitchen instead of letting people help themselves, and stopping dinner-time tea. This latter caused much resentment and Brother Charteris, an elderly wayfarer who had been there some time, was spokesman for the dissidents at one meal. He got up and asked if tea could be provided if those having it paid two pence per week. Brother Douglas with the tact of a politician promised the matter would have consideration. I suggested privately to Brother Charteris that he should draw up a Dossers' Magna Charteris the first clause of which should be 'Tea for Dinner', but he failed to see anything funny about it. Soon after permission was given to those who could not do without the luxury of tea at dinner to 'drum up' (i.e. make their own in a mug or billy-can with hot water only supplied from the kitchen) or have warmed up tea left over from breakfast !

We had no light or heating laid on in Clare House. It was a matter of candles or oil lamps for illumination and such wood as we could gather for fires. This latter extravagance was frowned upon and in a letter to my wife I said I hoped Brother Douglas did not see the smoke coming from the chimney of the room I was writing in ! We could not have had even candles and oil lamps always, because I distinctly recollect a visiting clergyman saying it would not worry him because he could shave in cold water in the dark in time for Mass.

Some useful, interesting elderly characters were in residence in the main house. They regarded the place as a permanent home. Brother Thwaites was a self-taught woodworker. He was crippled, but could play an excellent game of billiards, as he was always ready to demonstrate on the quarter-sized table in the recreation room. Above the entrance to this room, by the way, was the inscription which was meant to be applicable to the Home as a whole, 'Abound in hope all ye who enter here'. Brother Thwaites specialised in bas reliefs of the face of Saint Francis, and although not very good artistically, they sold well to visitors. Then there was Brother Dad, an elderly man with a bushy beard who pottered around doing odd jobs. He had little to say and did not mix much, yet one felt a fatherliness in his presence. He and Brothers Thwaites and Charteris and Brother 'B' (laundryman) were 'life members' and gave a sense of stability to what was for the most part, a floating population of wayfarers.

The rest of the twenty or so men from the road were much younger—a very mixed collection. Occasionally there would be an educated one, but the majority were below par and a few were definitely mental cases. Nearly all were from homes where there were domestic difficulties. It is impossible to evaluate work among such people. At least one can give them a good time for a few weeks—at most one can get them into habits of regular work, show them what spiritual resources are available and help them to find a job, and encourage them to keep in touch afterwards. In most cases of course, no good results are observable, and one can only hope that good seed has been sown which in due course will bear good fruit.

There was the case for instance of one wayfarer who had done the rounds of all the casual wards in southern England, and was a notorious trouble maker. He had known too the inside of prison and asylums. In the Hilfield Home and subsequently in other S. Francis Homes he found for the first time real Christian love. His response at the beginning was suspicion and resentment—he had grown to believe that every man's hand was against him and his against theirs. Yet through persistent goodwill towards him, he settled down, got regular work and married a good woman. His example served to convince me that no young man is hopeless.

More than once I have referred to the important place given to work at Hilfield in the early days. Recreation also had its place. It was (and is) important to teach young people not only to work, but also how to make proper use of their leisure. To that end, as well as for the sheer joy of playing games, acting, and singing together—all forms of healthful sport and games (indoor and out) were encouraged. Many were the times when Brother Douglas at the piano or Brother Charles with his fiddle, or both together, would lead us in spontaneous community singing. Some, with or without histrionic talent, would produce short plays, and humorous sketches, and give recitations. Neighbouring villagers were always welcome and sometimes entertainment parties came from Yeovil and Sherborne and even further afield. Thus contact with the outside world was maintained.

With rapidly changing social conditions it has been inevitable that the work of the Brotherhood should change, but I suggest it is well to remember from time to time the trials and difficulties and happiness of those who pioneered the world wide movement we have today.

Saint Francis : The Rose Garden : The Angels

That winteres day from out the rosie garden
whereof each fiery thorn his skin had leechd
by which cause he hurt no one when he preached/
he crept into our litel house/our warden
as nedeth us/to seke our Ladyes pardon
for that his fleschlie body had outreached
his spirits strength that all of us had fetched
under this roof we mended/which to harden
in Brother Suns distrust against sins rain
we strove as faithless. But he knew well
what we ignored : that Sister Moon would set
mortar of our labouring in vain
(he having borne seductions of hell)
and entering we saw him angels meet.

Him they irradiated light about/
we who felt its energy and drew
aback upon our knees/we foresaw
the painters vision that would give it out :
not the happy laughter of his shout
“ Here they poised/there their feathers flew ”
eternall as the peacock which he drew
so we should understand/we puzzled out
ser Giotto's weeping fliers at the Cross
the which watching we were at a loss
at Francis joy/his illumination.
Only near dying he told us their station
according to their presence in our vault.

Then were we terrified.

Si le buon Dieu le veult. . .

FRANK LISSAUER.

Books

Drawing Men to Himself

The Charismatic Christ.

By Michael Ramsey, Robert E. Terwilliger and A. M. Allchin.

Darton, Longman and Todd, 108 pp., 75p.

These addresses, given at a conference in the United States in 1972, are concerned on the one hand with the fascination the person of Jesus has exercised over many young people in recent years (including the part played in this by *Godspell* and *Superstar*), and on the other with the growth of the 'charismatic movement' and the discovery of spiritual gifts. These phenomena are viewed with wisdom and charity. 'The different experiences of devotion to Jesus—evangelical, liberal, ecstatic, political—all need one another', says the archbishop, 'for while Jesus

rejects none who invoke his name he would have all grow in his truth and his obedience'.

The attractiveness of Jesus and the liveliness of the Holy Spirit have both been foci for an excitement about the spiritual dimension of life for many who have been estranged from, or untouched by, historical Christianity. In this book such experiences are set in the context of the continuing experience of the Christian Church through the ages and the deeper treasures of Christian spirituality.

ALBAN S.S.F.

The Psychic and the Spiritual

The Priesthood of Man. By Anthony D. Duncan. Geoffrey Bles, £2.50.

The Occult. By Colin Wilson. Mayflower Books, £1.00, Paperback.

By one of those odd, but happy chances I was asked by the editor of THE FRANCISCAN to review *The Priesthood of Man* on the same day that the editor of *The Way of Life* (Guild of Health) asked me to review Colin Wilson's *The Occult* published some time ago but now issued in paperback. Both are important in their own right. Taken together they give a great deal of food for thought. *The Occult* is by far the best general survey of the subject avoiding both hysteria and cynicism. *The Priesthood of Man* is not an easy book. I doubt whether it would be suitable for the church book-stall even if issued later in paperback form. But it certainly ought to be read by all who are concerned with the relationship

between the psychic and the spiritual. Colin Wilson posits 'faculty X' to cover the whole field. It is a perfectly natural faculty which all men possess but most do not use. There is, for him, no need to invoke the supernatural; christianity has simply confused the issue; there is no distinction between psychic and spiritual because ultimately there is no supernatural.

Anthony Duncan seeks to establish a relationship between the two and to distinguish them. This he does by bringing together the insights of Western Occultism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christian mysticism. His examination leads him into that strange but fascinating country usually avoided by traditional theologians. It leads him to

take another look at such doctrines as The Fall and to propose the evolution of species as a consequence of that event. The later chapters of the book are much more controversial. On the subjects of reincarnation and mediumship Colin Wilson is, as would be expected, more convincing. Having eliminated the supernatural he is not encumbered with the task of trying to reconcile them with Christian belief ! But even allowing for this I wonder whether Anthony Duncan makes very shaky ground much firmer. Many would think that parts of his enquiry have led him into dead ends rather than fruitful insights. I, for one, do not think that the 'over-paternalistic'

protection of the Western Church led S. John of the Cross and S. Teresa to 'play down' the perceptive (psychic) gifts (p. 176). My reading of S. John of the Cross convinces me that he would agree with those Hindu ascetics whom, Colin Wilson states, insist that any advanced yogi can produce phenomena but that they are a waste of time—a red herring across the path of spiritual advancement. Interest in this sort of thing often involves immaturity. That, roughly, is what S. John says too !

Anyhow, if you really want to do some serious study in this field—get both books.

ALAN HARRISON,
Guild of Health.

What lies ahead ?

South Africa's Political Alternatives. Report of the Spro-cas Political Commission.

Edited by Peter Randall. 252 pp. with index, Rand, 1.50.

This is the most significant of the reports of the Commission and represents the work of the Political Commission since 1969. Of interest to all Christians quite apart from the African scene is the introductory enunciation of those ethical principles which ought to underlie any political system. Against this background the report analyses the political system of the Republic of South Africa and finds it wanting. What is revealed in this report is a steady and deliberate erosion of the rights of black people and the aggressive growth of the privileges and power of the white minority. The facts speak for themselves and what I have twice seen with my own eyes confirms them. The total loss of freedom is too high a price to pay for good order. Official activity in the Republic of South Africa is designed to frustrate the evolution of a more just order.

The worst effect of policy is to be found in the fact that the myth of separate development, and the selfish ideals of self-preservation for the whites, stand in sharp contrast to the Christian tradition, and breed in their upholders values that militate against the pre-eminent Christian virtues of love, compassion and true humanity.

Whilst the Commission sees little likelihood of successful revaluation in the near future it wisely emphasises that the pressures building upon South Africa are such as to produce a totalitarian state in which the liberties of *all* citizens will be eroded. The end result could be a continental race war of incalculable horror.

The only 'way out' is a change in the part of the 'whites' leading to the co-operation of all races in building an open society. Towards this end the Commission offers a series of practical

proposals. It needs to be emphasised that this Report is not a repetitive exercise in the liberal progressive political tradition of South Africa but, though continuous with that tradition, breaks new ground in offering a *comprehensive way forward*. This Report integrates into a feasible system the

conclusions of the earlier Spro-cas Reports.

There is no simple blueprint for overnight change, but a realistic assessment of possibilities and the advocacy of a multiple-strategy approach.

✠ JOHN CHARLES S.S.F.

Prayers

Earnest Pennies. *By Philip Martin.* Mowbrays, 61 pp., £1.00.

The Shade of His Hand. *By Michael Hollings and Etta Gullick.* Mayhew-McCrimmon, 265 pp., 99p (paperback).

Philip Martin's book is an anthology of prayers and meditations on the Holy Eucharist drawn from a wide variety of classical sources. To the prayers of preparation and thanksgiving there has been added a number of 'considerations'—meditative readings on the Eucharist to 'spark off' prayer. Beautifully produced, this is a little treasury to be dipped into. The introduction is a valuable little essay in this whole field of spirituality.

The second book is the third in a series of very useful and successful books of prayers by these authors and, like its predecessors, is to be highly commended. This collection has the honour of having been reprinted before publication—so great is the demand for it! The book, divided into three parts, is a collection of prayers and readings for times of sorrow and times of joy,

and it draws on a wide field of writers and sources as well as containing many original prayers by the authors. There is something here for all of us at some time in our lives. Perhaps its greatest value is in teaching people how to pray naturally and easily about everything—how to engage in that 'full homley dalliance' which is the heart of prayer.

The first section centres on the pain and the triumph of Christ and in the second there are prayers for use in times of pain and trouble, of isolation and spiritual travail. The third section is for those who are seriously ill or dying and for those who care for them and visit them. The centrality of the Resurrection in Christian faith and life which is clear throughout is heightened in the final selection of prayers.

✠ JOHN CHARLES S.S.F.

New Images

The Way of the Wolf : The Gospel in New Images. *By Martin Bell.* Seabury Press, New York, 127 pp., U.S. \$3.95.

A book of compelling and evocative power which twice moved me to tears and which answers the deep-felt need for an expression of the Gospel imperatives in new images. No word can adequately convey the riches of this

book which deserves to be more widely known and used. It is one of the most beautiful and spiritually powerful books I have ever read.

✠ JOHN CHARLES S.S.F.

Bucer's Influence

Martin Bucer and the Book of Common Prayer. By *E. C. Whitaker*
The Alcuin Club and Mayhew-McCrimmon, 183 pp., £4.50.

This important addition to the Alcuin Club collections gives to a wider public for the first time in centuries a definitive Latin text and a translation of Bucer's *Censura* and the treatise *De Ordinatione Legitima*. Both have been corrected by comparison of the available manuscripts and the introductory note makes it clear that the *Censura* sheds valuable light on the 1552 Prayer Book—an assertion

which can now be tested by the document itself and, more importantly, it is clear that *De Ordinatione* was prior to the Ordinal of 1551 and not derived from it. The general impression gained from a study of this scholarly presentation is that Bucer's influence on the Prayer Book of 1552 was smaller than has been generally supposed.

✠ JOHN CHARLES S.S.F.

Books Received

From Mowbrays :

Father Joe, by *Joseph Williamson*, 75p ; *The Trial of Man*, by *Ulrich Simon*, £1.25 ; *Don't Just Sit There*, by *Edward Patey*, 80p ; *Rhodesian Black Behind Bars*, by *Didymus Mutasa*, £2.25 ; *New Vision of Glory*, by *Richard Holloway*, £2.75 ; *Against Nature and God*, by *Joan Morris*, £2.50 ; *Dynamic of Love*, by *Mark Gibbard S.S.J.E.*, 80p.

From Sheldon Press :

The Wisdom of the Desert, by *Thomas Merton*, 75p ; *The City of the Gods*, by *John Dunne*, £1.75.

From S.P.C.K. :

Festival, by *Brother Roger Schutz*, £1.20 ; *Guru and Disciple*, by *Abishiktananda*, £1.25 ; *Partners in Mission*, 60p ; *Jerusalem Prayers*, by *George Appleton*, 60p ; *Commentary on the New Lectionary, Vol. 1*, by *John Gunstone*, £1.95 ; *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology*, by *Anthony Hanson*, £6.50 ; *Two Minutes at a Time*, by *Sister Cyrilla C.S.M.V.*, 40p ; *Paley*, by *M. L. Clarke*, £2.95 ; *Prayer*, by *Hans Balthasar*, £2.25 ; *The End of Man*, by *Austin Farrer*, £2.50 ; *The Shape of the Church to Come*, by *Karl Rahner*, £2.25.

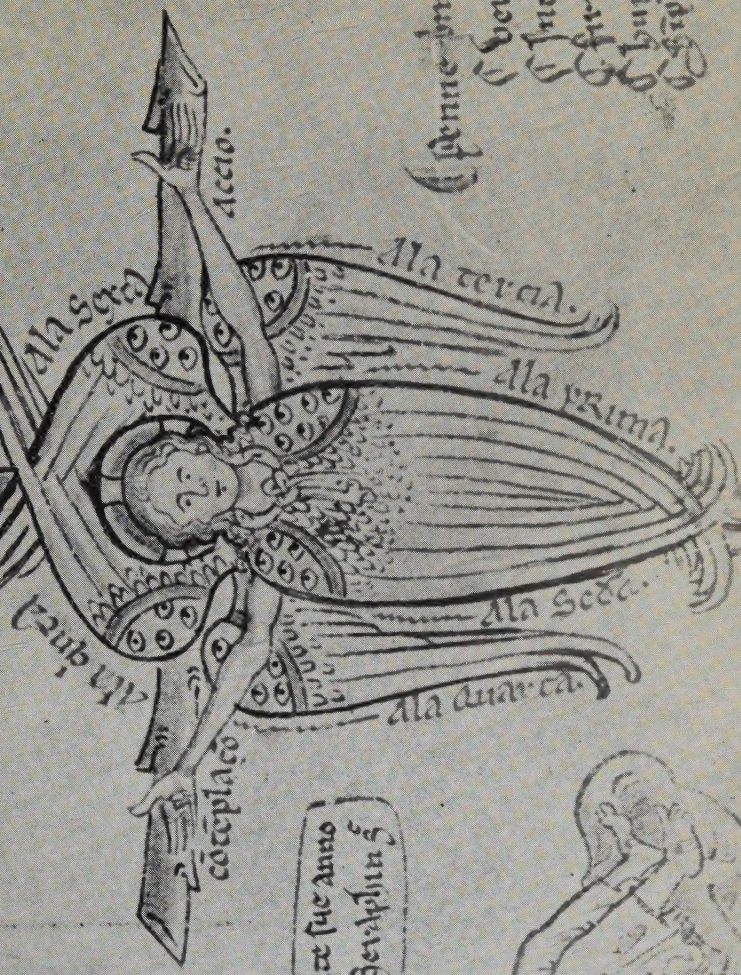
From Darton, Longman and Todd :

History of Primitive Christianity, by *Hans Conzelmann*, £1.50 ; *The Easter Jesus*, by *Gerald O'Collins S.J.*, £1.50 ; *The Will to Believe*, by *Rudolf Schnachenburg*, 80p ; *T.M.: A Signpost for the World*, by *Una Kroll*, 95p ; *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man*, by *Raimonda Panikkar*, £1.10 ; *Love Is My Meaning*, by *Elizabeth Bassett*, £2.25 ; *Christian Vocation*, by *Rene Voillaume*, 75p ; *Breaking Through to God*, by *Ladislav Boros*, 60p ; *Rule for a New Brother*, 50p ; *Introducing the Thought of Bernard Lonergan*, 80p ; *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving*, by *Gordon Strachon*, £2.75 ; *The Charismatic Christ*, by *Michael Ramsey et al*, 75p.

Jonathan Livingston Seagull, by *Richard Bach*, which was reviewed in our last number, is now available in Britain as a Pan paperback, 50p.

Anglican ag in obliq. Seraphim.

S^{er} francisc^{us} vice sue anno
penultimo videt Geraphin^{us}



Penne in e ale.
 Veritas
 Integritas
 Firmitas
 Humilitas
 Splenditas.

Saint Francis and the Angel of the Stigmata. From the Chronica Maiora of Matthew Paris (cccc. MS. 16, fol. 66v).

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